

THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE

APRIL

1926

EDITED BY
LEONARD HUXLEY



	PAGE
THE WAY OF THE PANTHER: Chapters XII-XIII. <i>By Denny C. Stokes</i>	385
APPLEBY SCHOOL: AN EXTRA-ILLUSTRATION TO BOSWELL. <i>By Algernon Gissing</i>	404
WATER-DIVINING: SCIENTIFIC AND COMMERCIAL. <i>By Hyacinthe Daly and John Timms (Professional Water-Diviners)</i>	415
THE TISSUE-CULTURE KING: A BIOLOGICAL FANTASY. <i>By Julian Huxley</i>	422
ADAM'S PEAK <i>By Ibn Sabil</i>	458
THE MYSTERIOUS CRY OF THE DEATH'S-HEAD HAWK-MOTH— WHAT HUDSON THOUGHT <i>By W. Courthope Forman</i>	469
A BLESSINGTONIAN IDYLL <i>By John Kendal</i>	473
WHO RIDETH ALONE: Chapters VI-VIII. <i>By P. C. Wren</i>	484
LITERARY ACROSTIC No. 38 510	



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BOOK NOTES FOR APRIL

Precept and Practice

THE INESCAPABLE CHRIST is the uncompromising title of a book by Walter Russell Bowie to which Dean Inge has contributed a Preface. It is a sincere and inspiring work on the practicability in the twentieth century of the teachings of the New Testament. The author not only sees clearly the tendencies of the age but realises its necessities, and finds these to be but little different from the necessities which Jesus Christ met—hence the ‘inescapability’ of Christ. In an age of materialism the spiritual life remains the only sure road to happiness; sacrifice is still the cause of perfect contentment; to give is still more blessed than to receive. It is of these simple truths in their relation to the common activities of life and their source—the inescapable Christ—that Dr. Bowie has written.

Nettles to Grasp

IN his new book, *What's Wrong with China*, Rodney Gilbert has exposed that troublesome country and its interesting inhabitants with the aplomb of a lecturer in anatomy. It is a vigorous book. The author begins by removing the rose-hued spectacles of myth and popular belief which have given glamour to the yellow race, and reveals characteristics and customs of surprising nature upon which the present distressing conditions are shown to be based. Thence he proceeds to examine the difficulties to be faced and to present to the reader his own passionate conviction that no amelioration may be expected until the British, French, American, and other governments concerned stop dallying with whatever powers are in being and act with the determination to put an end to a state of affairs which has long been intolerable. Mr. Gilbert's credentials are residence in China for fifteen years, the unique opportunities for observation and inquiry that come to a newspaper man, and the courage and ability to say precisely what he means in interesting style.



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BOOK NOTES FOR APRIL

Exit Sentiment

MAJOR LEONARD DARWIN, R.E., a son of Charles Darwin, and for over thirteen years President of the Eugenics Education Society, has written a book on *The Need for Eugenic Reform*. It is addressed exclusively to the well-educated man or woman, untrained in biology, who is prepared to take racial problems seriously and to devote time and energy to the consideration of this method of attempting to benefit the human race. And Eugenics needs to be taken seriously. There is no science which more sternly declines to yield its secrets to superficial study. Because of its sentimental content many are inclined to make casual inquiry into its teachings, and, in consequence, to harbour wrong impressions. Major Darwin starts from basic principles and teaches logically. He is sufficiently frank to say that eugenic reform is not without risks, but reasons that these should be faced because of the benefit which courageous reform would confer upon the nation.

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civilisation, and, with him, a soldier of fortune to attempt its reclamation from heathen ceremonial to future valuation for



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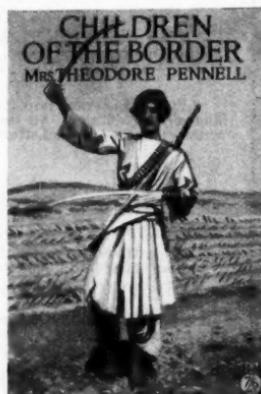
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BOOK NOTES FOR APRIL

probate. Synchronising with the signing of the agreement, the 'call of the blood'—the inherited *wanderlust*—which for ten years has been held in leash by the girl, returns with irresistible strength to send her into adventures whose intensity is pictured surely and in commendable style. Such is the outline of an exceptionally good romance which we have read with peculiar interest and pleasure. It will be published immediately.

Personality

A NOTHER first novel of more than passing note is *Children of the Border*, by Mrs. Theodore Pennell. In this case the unusual interest is divided between a good story and an author who has lived for many years amongst the Frontier tribes of which she writes. To those who know the North-West Frontier, the name of Dr. Pennell—the author's husband—will be familiar. Of him General Sir William Birdwood—who contributes a foreword to the novel—says: 'I do not suppose there was any individual on the Frontier who possessed greater authority or who was better known among our frontier tribes'—and proceeds to tell why, adding: 'It is no wonder that Pennell's name was known and honoured from one end of the Border to the other.' The story is founded on fact and deals engagingly with the effect on a hillman of the Great War in which he fought.



Sources of Inspiration

IT was Lord Balfour who first suggested the translation from the Spanish of that notable literary production *Islam and the Divine Comedy*, by Miguel Asin, a well-known scholar and professor of Arabic at the University of Madrid. The suggestion was made to the Duke of Alba, to whose generous initiative is due the English version which Mr. Murray has issued. When first pub-

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BOOK NOTES FOR APRIL

lished in Madrid the book caused a tremendous stir among critics of literary history, for it expounded the—to the Italian Dantists at least—heresy that the Divine Comedy was largely inspired by the Koran. To the Italians, Dante's poem had symbolised the whole culture of mediæval Christian Europe, and their dismay was exceeded only by the passion with which they—and a host of other critics and students—entered into controversy. Nevertheless Asin appears to have gained universal agreement with his thesis, and it is interesting to note that both parties to the conflict have been unstinting in their praise of the book. The translation has been made by Harold L. Sutherland, himself at home both in the Spanish language and in the subject, and is one which will be readily absorbed and discussed by many who hitherto have been denied the full 'case for the prosecution.'

The Race and the Swift

IT is a racy book which Ferdinand Tuohy, author of *The Secret Corps*, has written in *The Cockpit of Peace*. He is a journalist, and himself describes the contents as 'joyous adventurings in full journalistic cry.' When one considers the *timbre* of the voice of the modern Press in giving tongue one begins to appreciate the description, to receive impressions of the type of country crossed, of the not-to-be-excluded-from-the-death riders, and of those sterling animals which carry them inevitably (or someone will know the reason why) to victory. The Americans call this kind of thing 'red-blooded'—a term Mr. Tuohy proceeds to illuminate. He was one of Lord Northcliffe's 'young men' on the *Daily Mail*; thence to New York where, one gathers, the rôle of the simple Britisher recording first impressions of things American from prohibition and uplift to baseball and the Bowery, did not too well become him; thence to Paris on behalf of the *New York World*, and there to settle down (journalistically) to day-to-day excitements and delights. The book is packed with good stories of celebrities, politicians, criminals, and a host of people who achieved fame or notoriety, and, without a single dull page, carries the entertained and amused reader swiftly through two hemispheres in a succession of scenes and incidents animated by the author's genial pen.

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BOOK NOTES FOR APRIL

Just Out

THE new novel by Kathleen Norris has been published and is doing very well. It is called *The Black Flemings*, and deals with the skeleton belonging to an old landed family which is brought well into the limelight by a series of unusual and unexpected events. Die-hard family pride, tradition, and modern youth play their considerable parts in a story which compares with the best Mrs. Norris has written. She is an immediate 'best-seller' in America, her previous novel 'Little Ships' having figured consistently in the 'best-seller' returns right up to the publication of the present story. One of her books, *Rose of the World*, has been filmed and will be shown throughout the country during April and May. Mrs. Norris is the wife of Charles G. Norris, author of 'Brass,' 'Bread,' etc. He, too, has completed a new story. It is called *Pig Iron*—a curious title—and Mr. Murray will publish it in June.

Next Month

THE May number of the CORNHILL MAGAZINE will contain, among other contributions, further instalments of *The Way of the Panther*, by Denny C. Stokes, and of *Who Rideth Alone*, by P. C. Wren.

Will Addison's Love-Letters, by C. C. Fowler and L. Huxley, taken from the racy correspondence of Will Addison, a collateral of the great essayist, when an Oxford undergraduate after 1760, and his girl-friends at home in Yorkshire.

A General of the Riffs, being the account of a talk with one of the European officers of Abd-el-Kerim, on a visit to England.

The Chronology of Pickwick, by the Hon. Mr. Justice MacKinnon.

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LEONARD HUXLEY



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LITERARY ACROSTIC NO. 38	510

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Communications to the Editor should be addressed to the care of JOHN MURRAY,
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All Contributions are attentively considered, and unaccepted MSS. are returned when accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope; but the Editor cannot hold himself responsible for any accidental loss. MSS. cannot be delivered on personal application. Articles of a political nature are not accepted. Every Contribution should be typewritten on one side of each leaf only, and should bear the Name and Address of the Sender; a preliminary letter is not desired.



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P&O

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THE
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

APRIL 1926.

THE WAY OF THE PANTHER.

BY DENNY C. STOKES.

XII.

SHENDAW stood on the veranda steps and watched the tonga move down the road. He could see O'Donnell leaning against the hood hoops with closed eyes. The white patch of his bandaged face showed clearly against the black smock of Depelier, who was sitting forward on his seat talking to the humped bulls. They were fractious, tossing their heads, and by so doing jangled their neck-bells. They were unaccustomed to being driven by a European. They missed the native driver hunched behind the yoke, and never before had they been driven by cords from the tonga seat. There was no one to croon encouragement to them, no one to tell them how wonderful their fathers had been and how lazy they were, in low, liquid, and droned tones.

The planter lit his pipe with care. He was wondering if he had been hasty, if he had been wise in resenting O'Donnell's sneers. 'No,' thought Shendaw. 'No, men like O'Donnell need to hear home truths. They give no consideration to others; they are fanatically intolerant; yes, the only way is to meet that intolerance with intolerance. There are too many of them wandering through India, through the villages and bazaars, dropping a few words here and a few more there, little whispers that are not relevant to religious teachings—always trespassing over the frontier into politics and nationalism. No,' murmured Shendaw—'no, I was right, but Depelier—he's not a bad fellow, a hard worker—but a Frenchman, and, like them all, your friend when you are helping him, but a stranger, a perfect stranger, if you ask for help; if you ask him to conform to your opinion, then he becomes insolent. Yes, like all Frenchmen, a fountain of effervescent gratitude directly after

or just before you humour his wishes, but after, not long after, he forgets. But men like O'Donnell—ugh !'

Shendaw shrugged his shoulders as he remembered the sharp, narrow face and the glinting, shifty eyes. 'The Kappu is well rid of him, perhaps of both.' He pulled quietly at his pipe; his eyes followed the tonga as it wobbled and swung from side to side downhill from Hiboor and turned out of sight round the store-shed.

It was already hot, the midday heat threatened to be severe; the blue expanse of sky was veiled in a film of white transparent vapour. He had wasted the coolest part of the morning with bandaging O'Donnell; it was going to be hot. He would remain in the bungalow. Shendaw's bearer fussed on to the veranda and removed the basin from which O'Donnell's wound had been washed.

'Where is Sunu this morning?' asked Shendaw. 'I told her to tie that rose-tree to the trellis before the blooms weigh it down.'

'She is not here since yesterday night, sahib; she did not return this morning. I have asked Katinga Rao, but he does not know. It is strange, because she has no people near here, and yet I saw her speak to a strange pedlar that came—maybe she has gone: these Llambadis do never remain long under one tree—tsa.'

'I expect those black devils have persuaded her to go to Mangalore.'

Shendaw turned and looked angrily at the slopes of Kodi-Kundi. The bearer peered anxiously in the same direction, but could only see the white smudge of a tonga hood moving slowly up the hill across the valley.

'Black devils, sahib! that is the tonga of Father Depelier that climbs the hill—black devils—sahib!' There was astonishment in the bearer's wide staring eyes.

'Yes, black devils—one of these days, boy, you will learn that the devil uses many guises in which to work—all right, go. I am going over to Dreelkhan after tea—go.'

The hot hours of midday passed slowly. Shendaw slept until far into the afternoon and then went to his books in the office, and until tea was ready he worked on the estate accounts. After he had lingered through tea his syce brought his pony round, and he mounted and rode down into the valley across the bridge and through the coffee of Sisonoo. He rode slowly. He was satisfied with the progress made among the crop-covered acres. The jungle growth that had intruded while Turner worked the block

had already been cut back and dug away. Sisonoo presented a tidy, clean appearance, and Shendaw was humming contentedly as he dismounted before the Dreelkhan bungalow.

' You sound happy, Staines,' said Tibberd, as he came down the steps.

' Well, to tell you the truth, I am rather pleased with Sisonoo. Have you seen it ? '

' Yes, I admit it is looking well. I often stroll through in the evening. I don't know why it is your coolies work easily ; everything on your block goes smoothly. Whereas I have to drive, drive, drive. I have always had to drive every day I've been in the Kappu. I'm getting tired,' added Tibberd, as he signed Shendaw into a chair and took one himself. ' This year's crop is going, I think, to be a bumper one. If next year's is as good, I think I shall——' He paused.

' You think you will what ? '

' I think I shall sell—and go, Staines. I am a stranger here ; I have always been a stranger. I know I am disliked, but I refuse to bow to the confounded and idiotic ideas of the natives. If they showed any signs of considering me, I would consider them—but they don't, so I won't. They can do what the devil they like when they have done my work in my way. I've got trouble here already—it started the other day.'

' Talking of trouble, I've had a difference with Depelier's assistant, O'Donnell.'

Shendaw lit his pipe and told Tibberd about the affair on the previous day.

' As a matter of fact,' said Tibberd, when he had finished, ' I heard about the attack on O'Donnell from an old Gowda. He said O'Donnell received the same type of wound that Edwards received and died of—it's curious ; there seems to be a—well, a madman about. Have you any explanation ? '

It was some minutes before Shendaw answered.

' I don't think anybody has an explanation—there seems to be none. One could conjecture a good many things, but nothing definite—yes, I admit it's curious.'

' I have been thinking it over, Staines. I have been wondering what the explanation can be. Nunu knows nothing, Kantapa nothing, and the Gowdas—nothing, and—'

' And you ? ' Shendaw's inquiry was eager and sharp.

' Nothing—absolutely nothing.'

Tibberd thought he heard Shendaw sigh as once again his head went back against the chair.

'I suppose you know Sar Bhar is in the district,' said Shendaw.

'Well, I have heard that, but I don't think we need worry. Why should he interfere with us? And I don't believe there is any connection between Sar Bhar and the Edwards affair.'

'No, there is not—at least so I think—but we are the only people who would give the police peons a lead if trouble came. The Amildar is useless, and besides, the Gowdas, if they were threatened by Sar Bhar's men, would pay heavily under threat of having their crops burnt. If we collected them they would hunt him out or away in a week. Sar Bhar was up at my bungalow a day or so ago. I lost him—I tried to lay hands on him; he is a crafty devil, bazaar-born, an outcaste, cunning as a jungle cat. He would love to be rid of us.'

'My coolies,' laughed Tibberd, 'would love to see me elsewhere. They are holding a feast to-night. I don't mind this one, because it puts them in good heart before the picking starts—but everything is dry now, and to have scores of the fools wandering about with torches through the coffee makes me mad. Come in to supper—it's ready.'

While the planters ate, Tibberd resumed.

'There was a big tree in the centre of the estate. Once the coolies held a dance round it and burnt ten acres of coffee that surrounded it. That made me swear, as you can imagine. To-night they were going to dance again. I heard about their intentions the day I got back from Baheteglur. And to make quite sure that they would not dance round it to-night, I went out and cut it down. It was a giant. It took me seven hours' hard work. It was a useless tree; its drip soured quite a quarter of an acre of coffee, but, you see, it had the reputation of housing some damned shytan. Yes, there were murmurings and mutterings when I cut it down. I have been told by my writer that in the last three days the devil, in a vicious fury, has been whispering curses through the trees, that worms have entered the bellies of a dozen yemminies, that their milk dried, that their calves have died, and that a cobra has killed four men and two women. And Mundi, my munshi, says that somewhere behind the shadows these four men will be fighting for the two women. So I told Mundi I hoped the cobra would kill two more women and so put things right.'

'I also told him that I did not care if the coolies belonged to the devil or if the devil belonged to the coolies, but if they wanted to talk to each other they would have to do so in the middle of a barren paddy-field and not swarm among my coffee with torches, scattering sparks in all directions. This resulted in more mutterings.

'Last night the coolies went up to the tree, and I suppose tried to induce the devil to re-enter his house, although it was prone, lying among heaps of sodden leaves. Whether or no they would have succeeded I don't know, but I went out, white with rage, and drove them away and trod out their torches. I laid about with a stick. This morning I found my two dogs lying dead in their hut—poisoned. And yet the coolies have asked permission to dance in front here—to please me. Well, this feast is the one I allow, but why they want to please me I don't know. Their anger seems to have evaporated suddenly.'

Tibberd pushed back his chair and led the way on to the veranda, where he sat down in the light of the one lamp. Both men lit cigars and lay back in their chairs contemplating the unruffled blue of night, full of crude herb scents and the beat of minute singing noises. The drums of the feast had not started; only a hum of voices could be heard from below in the coolie lines. Shendaw rolled the sleeves of his shirt farther up his arms and undid the last button of the neck opening. Tibberd did the same; it was a hot night, very hot.

'May I suggest,' said Shendaw, 'that you do not let them dance here to-night? You say they are upset—they will get excited in the dance, and they might—'

'They won't do anything—no, they won't run amuck.' Tibberd smiled and continued to smoke. 'They know me now. I'm hard enough—the Kei-sahib—no, they won't ask for more trouble. They know that I am thinking about those dogs. Staines, the evenings will be long, very long without those dogs; you will have to come over more often. I am not saying that I regard you as a convenient substitute for a pair of dogs. But I shall be quite alone now—quite alone.'

Tibberd's face was glum. It was the first time Shendaw had ever heard the man express concern at being alone. Had he become hard, as hard as he undoubtedly was, through being alone? Had he fought to hide his real feelings? It seemed that this admission of fearing to be alone was not expressed in a casual mood. It had slipped out quickly; but it had always existed.

Tibberd had hidden his dislike of loneliness—most men had said that he preferred a solitary existence. They had not understood Tibberd.

' You know, Staines,' went on Tibberd, ' dogs make all the difference. Without dogs this life would be unbearable. I shall have to get some more, but they won't be the same as the others, the old ones. Poor devils! Damn the coolies—how I loathe them ! '

The two planters had not sat long in silence before a native came to the foot of the steps and salaamed.

' The night is hot,' he said. ' Maybe the sahibs would wish to hear a poor man tell a tale, no common tale, but a story of good account told by a pedlar who, though he is paid badly in the bazaars, can talk with an easy tongue.'

' What do you say ? ' said Tibberd, turning to his companion.

' Yes.' Shendaw shook himself farther into his chair.

' All right, start away.'

The native sank down on to his haunches and for a few moments fiddled with a spray of red huti flowers which he had in his fingers. And in that time Shendaw saw enough of his cunning face to make his breath come quickly. The native was spare in frame and wiry. He had hollow cheeks and bright eyes. But it was not his torn canvas jacket or his soiled dhoti that attracted Shendaw's attention. Three pock-marks on his forehead almost hidden by the low-bound yellow turban—Shendaw's eyes were fixed on them. He knew the face. He had seen it by the bridge at Baheteglur on the night of the riot; he had seen it a few days before, when this pedlar had come to his bungalow—it was Sar Bhar.

Shendaw did not move except to turn his head slowly to Tibberd. Tibberd was staring dreamily at the oiled wood of the veranda roof, watching the lizards courting in the cracks. He had not noticed who this pedlar was. He had never seen Sar Bhar, the budmash, from the coast at Malabar. Shendaw leaned across the small table that separated him from his companion, and while he took another cigar from the charcoal tin he whispered to Tibberd.

' Don't start—it is Sar Bhar.'

Tibberd dropped his eyes casually and glanced at the native. And then he quietly stretched for a cigar and also whispered as he did so : ' Don't say anything. Let him speak. I will send for Nunu ; we will get him before the night is over.' Then addressing the native he said :

'Wait, stranger, before you speak. I wish to get my pipe.' Tibberd went quickly into the bungalow and reappeared smoking his heavy-bowled pipe not many minutes after.

'Now,' he said, nodding to the patient vagrant squatting on the steps.

As soon as Tibberd had settled into his chair the native began to speak. His tones were incisive, clear and free from the usual singsong intonation of wandering pedlars.

'Sahibs, you have monkeys in these trees, many hundreds, maybe thousands. It is strange that monkeys are seldom seen dead, and yet they die in numbers; more certainly do they die in the rains, when the branches are never dry and when cold winds drive the monsoon rains hurtfully through the leaves.

'But Mharwa, the tiger, a mighty tiger of renown, once did find a monkey sick and dying at the foot of a tree. Now Mharwa had a full belly and was glad in heart, and in the way of tigers he smiled upon the sick monkey and purred pity into the monkey's ear. And above in the tree branches the tribal relatives of the sick monkey lamented shrilly like so many souls in torment. Now Mharwa thought such a noise was harmful to the sick beast, and so he grew angry and roared—the same roar that had often made hearts weak in many dark jungles, where curious sounds and hunting beasts move in the gloom. This roar did silence the monkeys in the trees, and then Mharwa approached the sick monkey to caress it.

'But the tiger's paw was heavy, though his heart was light with kindness—tha—the small skull of the monkey cracked like a nut against the tree, and Mharwa roared in astonishment, and the many hundred monkeys who had seen chattered curses at the tiger. Now all this was sad.'

The native paused. Shendaw had noticed that while he talked the pedlar's eyes had glanced time and time again at the rifle-rack which stood near to Tibberd. His eyes had also travelled over the lock of the main door of the bungalow, and had swept this way and that upon the few silver ornaments which were resting on the tables and cupboards of the veranda.

'He is having a good look round,' whispered Shendaw.

'Yes,' answered Tibberd. 'He has got his eye on my light Mauser.'

The pedlar resumed his story.

'Now this killing of their brother gave fury to the hearts of these many monkeys, and they swore as loudly as women can talk,

and for that matter for as long, and shrilly, like wind singing through rocky places. Mharwa had killed their brother—Mharwa must be punished. How was this to be? But so it must be. In this way the monkeys talked as they moved chattering through the high tree branches, warning watchmen and herdsmen of Mharwa's coming and giving warning to all the jungle that the great tiger moved, so that no spotted deer, jungle sheep, or sambhur waited to be killed. But instead they fled from the nullahs without drinking, and Mharwa grew empty and thin about his belly. And being a great and wise tiger, he did not grow too angry and break his tail by lashing it against the trees with fury. No, he moved on through two nights and two days and another night, hoping to tire his tormentors—but no, they followed, calling for all to hear, “Mharwa comes, Mharwa comes—Mharwa comes!” And this call echoed in the golden bamboos and through the grey morning shadows of the nullahs. And the great tiger grew sore with hunger and a little angered by the twigs and berries that hissed about his ears, thrown by the monkeys above him, who chattered for ever like stones rattling upon a roof of tiles.’

Once again the native paused. Tibberd smiled at Shendaw.

‘How the devil he can spin this yarn while he is devoting so much thought to the rifle-rack I don't know. He can't keep his eyes off it—I wish Nunu would hurry. I've sent for him—hallo, here's some coffee.’

The bearer placed the tray of cups on the table and then went back into the bungalow. When he had gone the pedlar continued his tale.

‘Mharwa being hungry, he lay down in some grass, tall thruna grass that grew between some cool grey stones. He was puzzled. Herdsman had heard the mocking of the monkeys and had hurried their cattle to safety, and the jungle beasts did not tarry in the heat of day. Now, from where the tiger lay he could see the main street of a small bazaar. He saw a pedlar filling a sack with something, and a woman near by watched the pedlar, but she could not see what he put into the sack. Now, there was no reason why she should know what was in the sack, but she was a woman and therefore must know. And so she waited until the pedlar had gone to a stall. Then she ran to the sack, looked in, and went singing to her house. Curiosity was satisfied.

‘“Curiosity is my friend,” thought Mharwa, who had seen all this.

'Mharwa rose and roared with delight. He turned, plucked some grass, and entered a cave carrying the green blades in his mouth.

"Mharwa is hungry," said a wise, grey-haired monkey.

"Mharwa is hungry," shouted the others in glee. Then their chatter ceased, for the tiger came out of the cave and plucked some more grass and with it some blue and yellow flowers. These he took into the cave.

"A tiger plucking flowers—it is strange," said the wise monkey, with his eyes wide in wonder.

"It is strange," chattered the others.

Mharwa took no notice of their talk. He struck down a butterfly and carried it into the cave; then he gathered more grass and flowers.

"What does he do?" asked the grey monkey.

"What indeed?" chirruped the rest.

At last Mharwa finished gathering flowers and butterflies, and left his peculiar occupation for the more normal one of drinking from a pool. The monkeys watched him go out of sight.

"Let us see," said the old monkey.

"We will," shrieked the others, as in one wild rush they dropped from the trees and gambolled into the cave. Slowly, and with greater wisdom, the grey monkey entered last.

"As soon as he had entered the black cave Mharwa rose from out of some grass in which he had been hidden and walked to the cave. In its mouth he lay down and listened.

"Flowers, grass, and a butterfly—how strange," said the monkeys.

"So curious that there must be a reason," mumbled the grey, wise monkey.

Then Mharwa roared. Shrieking with terror the monkeys fled out of the cave. As they came the tiger struck them down one by one. One by one their small skulls cracked like dry bamboos splitting in the sun, until all were dead. His work finished, Mharwa moved away into the jungle to find a deer and kill in the evening light.

When he had gone, the old grey monkey, shaking with fear, crawled out of the cave and over the dead bodies of his tribesmen, and then sorrowfully climbed into a tree. He was a sad monkey, for as he sat in the branches he thought of the future: "Should anything strange happen in a cave again there would be no foolish

brothers to enter first, to return first—*thu-sa*—it is sad—*tsu-yhai*."

'That, sahib,' concluded the vagrant, 'is the story of Mharwa and the monkeys. It has filled an idle minute, and if it has pleased the sahibs it may fill my belly.'

Tibberd flicked a rupee at the native. 'After the coolies have been here to dance you may again tell a tale, stranger, for the night is hot and we cannot sleep. Come again—the drums are starting.'

As Tibberd finished speaking the first tom-toms throbbed out their rhythmic beat from the coolie lines, and a few minutes afterwards Mundi, Tibberd's munshi, appeared in the lamplight and asked if the coolies might come and dance to the sahib.

Tibberd nodded, and Mundi went to fetch the coolies. 'At least,' said Tibberd, turning to Shendaw, 'at least they won't be dancing among the coffee. Mundi munshi is with them, so don't worry. My complacent bag of tricks, like all munshis, won't play double; he has too many posts to lose—second in command, weather prophet, accountant—not of the Aberdeen school—and so on.'

'I wish,' said Shendaw, 'you would not let them come.'

'It will be all right; here they come.' Tibberd pointed to a crowd of natives approaching the bungalow. They were headed by four tom-tom beaters; behind came the reeling dancers. They formed a half-circle before the veranda, and, while the oiled bodies of the dancers twisted and squirmed under the torches, native after native came forward to salaam and place limes at the planters' feet. The dancers continued their mad gyrations, swaying this way, then that way, encouraged by the drunken yells of the assembled coolies.

Tibberd's Madrasi butler stood close to his sahib, scowling at the crowd, longing to urge his master to tell the crowd to go. When a thin-faced Chetty ganger advanced to garland Tibberd with a wreath of jungle flowers, the old servant gripped a stick ready to strike. He was unhappy, apprehensive. Not many minutes after the garland had been placed on the planter's shoulders, the whole crowd seemed to sway forward on its toes. A voice cried out:

'The Kei-sahib, he angered the shytan.'

'Yhai—yha—yhu,' came the answer. In a flash the coolies rushed forward like leaves caught suddenly in a wind. A Hégédé struck Tibberd from his chair, a Mhun caste-man felled the old Madrasi butler, and a third knocked Shendaw senseless with a blunt

cuttie before he could jump up and defend himself. As he fell Shendaw saw Sar Bhar leering in the torchlight behind the crowd, and then everything blurred—and the two planters and the butler were lost in a mass of shrieking men, fighting to strike another blow at the battered forms lying upon the veranda.

As suddenly as the storm had broken, did it cease. The yells faded into whimpering echoes, torches vanished into blackness, and the crowd of some hundred persons faded into the shadows of the night, leaving only a dread silence where a drunken din had been before, leaving three crushed forms lying twisted on the bungalow veranda upon which a moon, full and clear, shone down as the wind moved through a clump of slender gums, causing the leaves to hiss and sigh in their gentle agitation. Later, when Shendaw regained his senses, he found Nunu bending over him.

'Sahib, sahib,' whispered the shikari. 'Sahib, come if you have strength—come, we will follow Sar Bhar. He thinks you dead, but come, and it is he who will be dead though he may not know that he is.'

Shendaw struggled to his feet and looked down at Tibberd's twisted body lying piled upon that of the old butler. Tibberd was dead, already cold. Shendaw shivered as he drew his hand away from the planter's battered face.

The moon was high and cold; it lit the veranda strongly and seemed to make the scene more eerie and unreal. Once more Shendaw bent down over Tibberd and took his hand. But it was cold and fell back stiffly on to the bamboo matting. Walking unsteadily into the bungalow, Shendaw bathed his face, and then, feeling less faint, came out on to the veranda and went to the rifle-rack.

The light Mauser had gone, and also one of the shot-guns. Once again the planter turned into the bungalow, and in Tibberd's room found a revolver. Putting this into his hip pocket, he joined Nunu, and the two slipped into the squat coffee trees that cloaked the slope below Dreekhlan—and they were lost in the night.

No sooner had they gone than Mundi crept from the shadow of a poinsettia bush. With him was Tibberd's cook. They moved to the steps and peered at the two bodies on the veranda.

'I heard Sar Bhar call upon the coolies to strike,' said the cook.

'But who did the deed?' said Mundi.

'The coolies,' said the cook.

'No,' shivered Mundi munshi.

'Then, Sar Bhar,' suggested the cook.

'No, it was the angry shytan,' stuttered Mundi.

'That is so,' echoed the cook.

XIII.

To steal round the Dreelkhan bungalow had been Sar Bhar's intention. He had thought of learning enough concerning the movements of the two planters from the servants without presenting himself before the veranda. But as he approached the bungalow he was stirred by an impious desire to confront the two Europeans and thereby satisfy the capricious mood that had assailed him; and so, shuffling into the lamplight, he had salaamed and offered to tell a tale. It was fortunate for him that Tibberd had delayed while searching for a pipe, for he had been uncertain what tale to tell. He had forgotten most tales that he knew. He had heard many, he had paid pedlars to tell them to him often in his wanderings; and Sar Bhar experienced delight when he realised that he, ragged and unkempt, was offering to fill an idle moment of a hot night for the two planters.

He might have told the story of the Brahmani kite and its fine talons, or explained what fire-flies were and how they came to light the night; but he had forgotten these stories, and for a minute had considered the story of the tucan and its mate, but the thread of that forsook him, and only as Tibberd sank into his chair did he recollect the tale of Mharwa. As he told the tale he longed to laugh and tell the two fools smoking in their chairs who he was and why he had come; he longed to have even his victims share the poignancy of the situation. But Sar Bhar restrained himself, told his tale and picked up the reward of one rupee, and went his way to the coolie lines, satisfied that Tibberd's Mauser rifle would be better in his hands than in the planter's, when the Konpa Treasury Office was surrounded by his men and looted.

Sar Bhar learnt of Tibberd's action in cutting down the giant tree, and with this information it was not long before he saw how to use the crude passions of the coolies of simple Mhun caste for his own ends without being directly concerned in a tragedy of violence. And so, as the drunken dancers had twirled before the veranda, Sar Bhar had urged the coolies to avenge the disturbed shytan and save themselves from persecution. Then had come the wild rush, and, while the deranged Mhuns danced upon the prone

forms of the two planters and the Madrasi butler, Sar Bhar had pushed his way to the rifle-rack and taken the Mauser, and then slipped away from Sisonoo before the tragedy ended, content with the knowledge that the only Europeans in the district were dead and so unable to thwart his designs upon the Treasury.

Many of the things believed by the Gowdas are untrue and absurd. But they say that no man can think without the trees of the jungle understanding his innermost thoughts and without the leaves whispering those thoughts to the gods. If that were so, the gods would have been surprised at the thoughts of the ragged pedlar who leisurely trod a twisting path through the coffee fields of Dreelkhan and on to Sisonoo. They were strange thoughts for a poor vagrant of the jungles, and unbecoming to a simple budmash of the shadows. But Sar Bhar was no simpleton, and his thoughts were many and of some interest, and he smiled as he walked through the profound silence of the jungle night. Years before, many years before, he had bid farewell to his bearded father in a bazaar north of Bombay and had entered a college in that city, and after two years had been considered worthy to sail for England, to London, to complete his education in the various and scattered colleges of its university. His father's eyes had been blinded with tears, and the pitiful wails of his mother had filled Sar Bhar's ears for many a night as he lay in his cabin listening to the suck and press of the sea against the ship's great sides. He remembered how his heart had throbbed when an English steward first called him 'Sir,' and how when the grey docks of Liverpool came into view he had hesitated to offer money to the man, and then how he had sighed with satisfaction when porters, white men, Europeans, touched their caps and touched them again and again when he dropped half-crowns into their open hands; whereas before he had salaamed low before the Scots police sergeant of his home bazaar. One year passed in the London colleges in Gower Street and the Strand, and then another year and another sped their way and left him with many friends.

Sar Bhar stopped and looked back over the jungle road. The moon was high and clear. The road was empty but for himself and his faithful shadow. He changed the Mauser from one shoulder to the other, and then he laughed a low dry laugh and continued on his way. Yes, he had had many friends in London. It had taken him many months to know why they were so tenacious; it had been a long time before he knew the explanation—money: his

father's money, the money of an old bearded merchant in a small bazaar north of Bombay, who sat on his bamboo mat and sold to the bazaar people whatever his growing store contained. And this same money, with the aid of a few chance acquaintances, had opened the doors of many a luxurious mansion to Sar Bhar. He remembered the thrill of dancing with white women. He laughed again when he remembered how his natural eloquence had deceived them, how his polished manners had caused him to receive invitations to many gay functions, and how his lying tongue had made him appear worthy of those invitations, at least in the eyes and consciences of his hosts and hostesses, more especially of his hostesses. Yes, he had found the narrowly cultured, delicate European women eager listeners. They were as simple as the straight-backed Gowda women, though more beautiful, and as conveniently ignorant. They accepted his gifts and enjoyed his hospitality, and Sar Bhar laughed again as he paused on the jungle road and thought of the intense satisfaction that he had felt when he had been known as the mysterious Mr. Bhar, the delightful Mr. Bhar, the cultured Eastern man—Mr. Bhar. But there had been times when he had met quiet-eyed men from the East. Most of them had been easy to gull, but some became curious, and he had found it best to be indisposed and resort to Paris or Brussels for a cure.

Then had come the return to India. The first night on board and the affair with a snobbish and youthful dullard. How that sneered 'damnable nigger' had seared into his very soul! And then India and his father. His father's joy, the old bearded man weeping as he leapt from his mat to greet his son—the old man's wrath when he, Sar Bhar the son, laughed at the crowded stall and at his saried mother with unshod feet; at the windowless rooms and simple food; and how he had refused to place jasmines on the shrine and seek purification after his journey overseas. The old man had thrown him out penniless and then died of anger; but his career in the Civil Service was assured. But that too ended when some devilish mood caused him to steal, and from an honourable post he went to the Central Poona jail.

Then had followed, on regaining his liberty, one criminal affair hard upon the other; north, south, east, and west travelled Sar Bhar, leaving everywhere the police duped and perplexed; and then to the Malabar coast among the Moplahs until the presence of eager troops and spluttering machine-guns made life a precarious

possession; and from the coast to the fiasco of Baheteglur; but now—Sar Bhar turned and watched a small point of light pricking through the trees. It was the light of Dreelkhan bungalow. It was shining down on two dead planters, and to-morrow or the next day the small Konpa Treasury would yield the stored taxes and bring London within reach again, and once more white-skinned women would accept the gifts of Sar Bhar and receive him gladly among their guests as the elegant and eloquent Mr. Bhar.

Sar Bhar laughed softly as he fingered his ragged canvas jacket and lifted his torn linen dhoti from about his ankles. Before long he would wear very different clothes—that would be a few months after the gruria shrubs sent a finger of smoke trembling to the sky, when his men would seize upon the small treasures of Konpa, Hallebile, Muntani, and Zupore. He, Sar Bhar, would receive half of what was found—of that he was certain, for he had picked his men well. They had failed courageously at Baheteglur: there had been Europeans there; in the Konpa district there were none. Yes, his men were reliable—none of them wished their names known to the police—Sar Bhar had picked them well—they waited for the signal. . . .

He would give the signal at dawn if by the time he reached his hut on the slopes of Kodi-Kundi a messenger was waiting from Hallebile to say all was ready. If not, he would have to wait another day until sufficient of his men had gathered in the bazaar, and then the well-planned looting would be swiftly done; then—England for Sar Bhar of the jungle roads.

A twig snapped sharply somewhere behind him, near the road. He jumped into a bank of shadow and peered backwards. He could see nothing. The cold gleam of the moonlight revealed an empty road. Sar Bhar went on more swiftly than before, and behind him along the jungle-fringe two figures crouched forward as they followed him.

The cat-eyed shikari Nunu had followed rapidly in spite of the intense darkness under the trees. Shendaw had found it difficult to keep up. He had faltered, stumbled and lagged behind, though with every minute that went by his zest for the pursuit increased. His foot had snapped the twig which had startled Sar Bhar, and Nunu had tripped him into the shadow of a bush as the budmash turned to see what had caused the noise.

'No great haste, sahib. Sar Bhar is cunning. No troubles will come to Konpa to-night—the budmash will sleep, and while

he sleeps we can jump upon him. His hut is in a hollow on the grass of Kodi-Kundi. That I know,' Nunu whispered into Shendaw's ear as he lay in a clump of grass, panting from the fall the hunter had given him.

Shendaw could see Nunu's face twitching with eagerness, his eyes dead upon the retreating figure of Sar Bhar on the road in front. Not a muscle of the shikari moved, and yet the planter could feel the blood throbbing through the hand which rested upon his shoulder.

'Be still, sahib. We will follow soon. We must have care. Sar Bhar can go like a feather upon a river—swiftly, unseen, unheard—though I, Nunu, might again find him. Now, sahib—come, but with care.' Nunu sprang forward, and Shendaw followed through the grass of the roadside.

Sar Bhar had turned out of sight round a bend in the road, and when Nunu peered out from between some fallen trunks there was no sight of the budmash, though the road was clear in view and straight for a mile under the cold light of the moon.

'Tsu—simu.' The shikari swore softly under his breath as he signed Shendaw to remain still while he went forward to see in which direction Sar Bhar had turned off the road. The planter remained crouching in the shadow of the fallen trees and watched the dim form of the shikari glide through the shadows that hung black under the massed trees which towered over the road on each side. A few minutes passed after Nunu had vanished from sight before the eerie call of a tucan wavered through the night. Shendaw rose from where he had been hiding and ran, keeping in shadow, to where the sound had come from. Nunu loomed by his side from between two trees and led at a rapid pace along a dark jungle path, so sheltered by overhanging branches that no moonlight penetrated the canopy of leaves to mark its course. Nunu continued on without a faltering step. Shendaw followed, stumbling in the darkness over curled roots and piled stones. Binder plants clung about his legs, thorns tore his groping hands, and talla berries stung against his face, cutting it with the coarseness of their skin; but he blundered on hard upon the heels of Nunu, keeping the native's dhoti constantly in view, where it appeared as a white smudge in the heavy blackness of the sheltered path.

The shadowed path turned and twisted; upon every turn its surface became rougher and more tiresome to the feet, and the out-growth of the jungle stretched farther and farther across until

both Nunu and Shendaw were forcing themselves through a thick, tenacious barrier of cruel thorn. Quite suddenly they emerged into the open, with the round yellow moon dipping down to the smooth grass slopes of Kodi-Kundi. Nunu sank down instantly on the fringe of the jungle, and Shendaw copied his prudent action.

'There, sahib,' whispered the shikari, 'there is the hut of Sar Bhar, and there on higher ground above is a pile of gruria shrubs that he will put fire to to give the signal to the budmashes of Konpa and Hallebile; for it is in those two places they wait, I have heard from one of them, to take the treasury manni, and burn and thieve as they did do in Baheteglur, as you have told me.'

Nunu pointed to where the thatched roof of a toda herdsman's hut showed above a rise in the expanse of coarse pasturage. Near by there was a pile of cut shrubs, but nowhere could Shendaw see movement or hear any sound. The night was deadly still. As the two men waited and watched, a jackal slunk nosing towards the hut, stopped within a few yards of it, and then turned and scampered away, stopping twice before reaching the black of the jungle to throw its nose high and send a dismal wail echoing uncannily through the silent Kappu Valley.

Shendaw shivered at the sound. Nunu hissed in his ear: 'The jackal finds no liking for his own kind—come, sahib, nearer, so that we can see whether Sar Bhar sleeps—or not.'

Nunu and Shendaw slithered forward over the dew-soaked grass towards the hut. Yard by yard they neared the low grass walls which stood in a hollow of the hillside. Every now and then Nunu stopped and listened—he could hear no sound—again he slithered forward as silent as a cat. In a few minutes they had reached the pile of gruria shrubs and dragged themselves round the base, so that they could overlook the door of the hut upon which the moon shone with unusual brilliance.

Nunu drew in his breath sharply.

'Tsu—sa—ee,' he breathed, as Shendaw squirmed by his side and stared amazed at the hut—for in the low doorway squatted Sunu the Llambadi girl, her slender arms folded about her knees, her delicate face raised so that the moon shone straight over its fine features. Her eyes were closed, she was rocking from side to side.

Uncertain what to do and afraid to approach the hut over the space between them and the girl, carpeted as it was with only short-cropped grass which afforded no cover, the two men remained

watching the girl. As they watched she opened her eyes and, inclining her head, peered into the interior of the hut, and then she got up and came towards the gruria shrubs.

Shendaw and Nunu drew back into the shadow. When she reached the pile Nunu sprang at her and stifled her cry with his hand. The planter lifted her feet from under her, and between them they forced her to lie still. When she recognised her captors the fear left her eyes and she tried to speak.

'Let her speak, Nunu,' whispered Shendaw.

'But, sahib, what if Sar Bhar hears ?'

'I will go and see if he is there,' said Shendaw. He crawled down to the hut, looked through the door, and sprang in.

But the form on to which he sprang was inert. He turned it over. There was a faint smile on the man's face—it was Sar Bhar. His skin was wet and chill; his eyes, open, stared blindly at the grass roof. Shendaw flashed his hand across them—they did not flicker; he felt the native's hand grow colder as his own rested on it. Sar Bhar was breathing weakly; the planter could scarcely feel the deliberate breaths on his cheek. Shendaw went out and ran back to Nunu.

'Let her speak—there is nothing to fear.'

Reluctantly the shikari relaxed his grip on the girl.

'Tell me, Sunu,' said Shendaw, 'why are you with Sar Bhar ?'

Sunu's great eyes shone full into those of Shendaw, her face came very near to his. She was quivering slightly.

'Sahib, he came asking many questions; I did not know he was the much-talked-of budmash, though I had heard many peoples talk of him. But I thought it might be he, and I told him you beat me, and his eyes became full of fire and he said he would avenge such a wrong.'

Sunu paused and edged a little nearer against Shendaw where he knelt under the moon by her side, with Nunu watching every movement she made, ready to strike if she played foul to the sahib.

'He told me to come with him, and I came to this hut, and all day men cut gruria shrubs and put them here near where we rest. Sar Bhar told them to go to Konpa and wait until smoke rose into the sky. They went. Then he told me he would kill the sahib and Sahib Tibberd at Dreelkhan. But to-night he came and said no word. He was weary. I gave him coffee—tsa—he now sleeps. He will not wake—I put wartharti blooms, crushed, in the coffee. Wartharti blooms have no scent, no taste, but they give sleep to

which there is no end—they kill—Sar Bhar will not wake. He can now never kill the Sahib of Hiboor.'

Sunu's voice faded in a whisper, and again she quivered nearer to Shendaw. As soon as the girl finished speaking the two men ran back to the hut. Sar Bhar was cold. Nunu lifted him and shook him. Shendaw saw that the eyes were glazed. He pointed to them.

'Tsu—that is well.' Nunu allowed Sar Bhar to thud back upon the earthen floor, stiff—dead.

'Nunu, take Sunu back to Hiboor. I am going to Konpa to see where the police peons are. I know five of them; they are young, and with me they will drive the budmashes, those that wait for Sar Bhar's signal, from the bazaar. I will take this rifle. If I am not back by midday of to-morrow, come with the Gowdas, and come armed.'

'Sahib, let me come,' Nunu appealed to Shendaw earnestly.

'No, go back to Hiboor and see no one enters the bungalow; more good that way, Nunu, more good.'

Shendaw placed his hand on the shikari's shoulder and then allowed it to rest a moment on Sunu's hair. She sprang to his side and pressed her hot forehead against his hand. Passionate sobs choked in her throat—and Shendaw sped quickly across the baked pasture of Kodi-Kundi towards Konpa.

Nunu watched him disappear in the uncertain lights of night. Then he entered the hut and stirred Sar Bhar with his foot. He spat.

'Tsa—your brothers will come when I have gone.'

The shikari picked up a cloth-bound bundle that had belonged to Sar Bhar, and emerging again into the clear night he took Sunu by the hand and led her down over the cropped grass to the bridge of the Kappu river, and turned southwards on the shadowed road towards Hiboor.

(*To be continued.*)

*APPLEBY SCHOOL: AN EXTRA-ILLUSTRATION
TO BOSWELL.*

THE old hobby of grangerising or extra-illustrating happily seems to have fallen out of use of late years. At least it is not so much in evidence as it used to be at bookstalls and in booksellers' catalogues. Few sights were more disturbing than that of a purchaser picking up a book, paying its price, then, after cutting or tearing out one or two plates or portraits, throwing the volume down and going on his way rejoicing. I forget whether Lamb speaks of this particular form of outrage, but he was the one to have handled it with a becoming delicacy of irony. The ordinary man is tempted to commit a breach of the peace.

A more harmless pursuit of somewhat the same order is that of extra-illustrating a favourite book by way merely of annotation and research. Few books can offer a wider field in this direction than Boswell's 'Johnson.' The various editors of the text have done a good deal, but nobody has approached Mr. Aleyn Lyell Reade in indefatigable researches into the byways of Johnsonian lore. In his monumental genealogical quarto, and his later 'Johnsonian Gleanings,' he has not only added vastly to our knowledge of the doctor's kindred and the circumstances of his early life, but has corrected positive errors of Boswell himself as well as of his best editors. There is, of course, a limit to which an editor can go by way of notes in issuing the text of his author, but since Mr. Reade is free from this restraint by his method of publication, his works, whilst directly illustrating Johnson, become also a mine of information upon the social and domestic life of the period with which he deals.

It is true the chief intellectual interest gathers about the mature Johnson, the man of Fleet Street, of the clubs and the sumptuous dinner-tables. That is the figure which naturally comes to the mind at the mere mention of his name; but we all seem to be agreed that in his particular case no incident of his life is insignificant, and those earlier years of his long, heroic struggle are full of experiences which well repay the zeal of the extra-illustrator. In fact, hardly enough has been said about what we may call the country side of Dr. Johnson throughout the whole of his life, a side which

invariably brought out all the amiable and tender qualities of his generous soul. My present subject, however, though associated with the country, has no opportunity of touching upon this. It illustrates merely one of those efforts of the young Johnson to gain a normal establishment in life which, like the rest, was doomed to disappointment. In those early years of his, after his marriage, when he seemed baffled on all hands, Johnson received an offer of the mastership of a school provided he could obtain the degree of Master of Arts. This is how Boswell states it, without naming the school or saying whence the offer came. From other sources it is known that the school was situated at Appleby in Leicestershire. And a very delightful old school it is to this day, full of interest and charm on its own account, quite apart from the added interest of Johnson's desire of its mastership.

It would be interesting to know how the vacant post was first brought to Johnson's notice. Little more than a year had elapsed since the abandonment of his own venture at Edial and his consequent departure to London in company with his late pupil, Garrick. He had stayed there but three months, vainly endeavouring to finish his tragedy of 'Irene,' and at the same time making tentative proposals to Mr. Cave. Those were the days when he 'dined very well for eight pence with very good company at the Pine Apple in New Street.' But it did not help him. With his unfinished tragedy he fled back to Lichfield, where at last he got it done. With this off his mind and ready, as he hoped, for production, he returned to London, taking his wife with him this time, so evidently intent upon a permanent settlement. The tragedy, however, was refused at Drury Lane, so with his ode 'Ad Urbanum' Johnson laid definite siege to Mr. Cave and the *Gentleman's Magazine*; in the meantime, also, writing 'London, a Poem.' In the following May—of 1738—when he was twenty-nine, this was published, and must have led him for the moment to believe that the worst was over. The poem received universal applause, and Pope on learning it was by some obscure man named Johnson remarked, 'He will soon be déterré.' None the less it was at this very juncture, on learning of the vacancy, that the obscure man felt constrained to seek the mastership of Appleby school. But by the statutes of the founder the post could only be filled by a Master of Arts. Johnson had taken no degree at Oxford, and it was found through Dr. Adams that an honorary degree was too great a favour to be asked of that university. It was then that

Boswell suggests Pope took steps 'to recommend him to Earl Gower, who endeavoured to procure for him a degree from Dublin.'

This fact is gathered from the note addressed to Richardson in Pope's own handwriting, which Dr. Percy permitted Boswell to copy, 'with minute exactness, that the peculiar mode of writing and imperfect spelling of that celebrated poet might be exhibited to the curious in literature.' The actual words of this note which concern us are the following, in reference to the poem 'London':

'Mr. P. from the Merit of This Work which was all the Knowledge he had of Him (Johnson) endeavour'd to serve Him without his own application; and wrote to my L^d gore, but he did not succeed.'

This is explicit enough, and Boswell, of course, gives us the letter which Lord Gower consequently wrote to a friend with a view to gaining Dean Swift's influence with his Irish University. Still it is strange that his lordship not only omitted to state so influential a fact as Pope's instigation, but on the other hand, writing from Trentham (in Johnson's own country), puts his appeal down distinctly to purely local influence.

'Mr. Samuel Johnson [he says] is a native of this county, and much respected by some worthy gentlemen in this neighbourhood; these gentlemen do me the honour to think that I have interest enough in you to prevail upon you to write to Dean Swift. . . . They say, he (Johnson) is not afraid of the strictest examination though he is of so long a journey; and will venture it, if the Dean thinks it necessary; choosing rather to die upon the road, than be starved to death in translating for booksellers, which has been his only subsistence for some time past.'

An odd part about the whole of this application, however, is that a Dublin degree would not have qualified Johnson for the post at all, as the statutes of the school in question require that the master appointed must be, not merely a Master of Arts, but a Master of Arts of one of the universities of Oxford or Cambridge. However well disposed to Johnson personally the governors may have been, it is hardly likely that they contemplated a violation of their trust merely to benefit him. A very interesting aspect of the question, though, lies in the fact that the old Minute Book of the period discloses a distinct squabble amongst the governors over this particular vacancy in the mastership.

But before going into details of this, I will say something of the foundation of the school itself. It was established and endowed by Sir John Moore, Lord Mayor of London in 1681, who died in June 1702, and the first annual audit of the governors was held on June 11, 1707, 'being the founder's baptismal day.' Much might be said of the opulent merchant Sir John, who was sometime in the East India trade, for he was evidently an interesting character in stirring times. But a few facts must suffice. Born at Norton, near Twycross, a mile or two south of Appleby, he was the second son of Charles Moore, Esq., who was lord of one of the two manors of which the parish of Appleby consisted. In the same year that he became Lord Mayor he was elected president of Christ's Hospital, 'to which he was a great benefactor, particularly in erecting and endowing a magnificent pile of buildings for the writing and mathematical schools on which he bestowed upwards of £10,000.' In addition to other distinctions he received for his services during his mayoralty a notable grant from Charles II of an augmentation to his arms. For the historical glimpse it gives, I cannot resist quoting some of the very words of this grant. After the usual preamble, it runs :

'We, calling to mind the many faithful services of our trusty and well-beloved Sir John Moore, Knt., late lord mayor of our city of London, who in his year of mayoralty, which was a time of great tryal and difficulty, demonstrated such a constant and unshaken loyalty towards us, as by God's special assistance hath enabled him with courage and resolution to maintain the honour and dignity of our crowne, as well as the true rights and privileges of that our city, and also to stand firm against all threats and violences of an impetuous, fierce, and seditious party, which would have ended in overturning the government, had they not been stopt in their course by his prudence and courage. We have therefore thought fit in consideration thereof to make some addition to his coat of arms, and that of his family, which may remain to posterity as a notable mark or badge of his constant fidelity. Wherefore our will and pleasure is that the said Sir John Moore and the descendants of Charles Moore, father of the said Sir John Moore, do henceforth bear, as an augmentation to their arms, on a canton gules one of our lions of England.'

This then was the founder of the dignified old Grammar School at Appleby. It is not surprising that a man of such opulence and distinction should have secured Sir Christopher Wren as his

architect for the design he had in mind, and happily the mellow brick structure remains there unaltered to this day. It is a pity we are denied the personal association of the young Johnson with such a spot, even if it had but lasted for a year or two, for had he secured the mastership we may be sure Johnson would never have solved the problems of his life in such rustic seclusion. The school had been established thirty years when Johnson sought it, nearly two hundred years ago, and no doubt it would have afforded a stately residence for him who had been dining at the Pine Apple in New Street. The central body of the building comprised what was called the Grammar School with apartments above it, flanked at each side by a wing projecting slightly and united by little cloisters in front with five semicircular arches. Through the central one you pass to five also semicircular stone steps diminishing as they rise to the double doors which give immediate entrance to the great schoolroom. This is the room where Johnson as the head or Latin master would have presided. The old account says :

'The right wing and apartments over the grammar school are in the occupation of the headmaster, and are capable of accommodating in lofty bedrooms 50 boarders besides his own family. The Writing and English schools take the ground floor of the left wing, and the floors above are occupied by the second master.'

The Latin Master, the post which Johnson sought, received £60 salary with residence ; the English master, £40 with residence ; the Writing master, £30 per annum alone.

Such would have been Johnson's establishment had he been able to secure the appointment. Two centuries have hallowed Wren's building, which is absolutely unaltered but for the removal of cloisters at the back, at the end of the eighteenth century, in order to provide some additional accommodation in the form of 'a large and comfortable dining or sitting room for the use of the boys, with a neat study at the end for the headmaster.' The building is still crowned with its little dome or cupola, and the face of the clock below, which melodiously strikes the hours in that rural quietude on an old bell of interest in itself, bearing the date of 1585. In front lies the green playground of two acres or more enclosed by a brick wall on the roadside, shaded by a row of trees. Such a setting surely must have had some educational effect in

itself on many of the boys. But with the changes of time the school in its original purpose languished, and it has now for many years become the elementary school for the boys of the village, whilst the endowment is bestowed in scholarships tenable elsewhere for competitors from the various parishes specified in the original grant.

'This noble foundation,' as Nichols, the historian of Leicestershire, rightly calls it, 'is under the direction of thirteen governors who meet annually on St. Barnabas to transact the business of the school.' Some of these, then, in 1738 were 'the worthy gentlemen of this district' referred to in Lord Gower's letter as favouring Johnson. A few years ago the late rector of Appleby, the Rev. C. T. Moore, himself a member of the founder's family and a governor of the school, kindly allowed me to look at the original Minute Book of that date to see what reference was made to the vacancy, with permission to make any use of what I could find. The result seems interesting enough to justify a quotation of my extracts in full. On the annual meeting day, June 11, 1739, when there should have been a full board to discuss the vacancy which should that day have been filled, only five of the governors turned up.

'MEMORANDUM. Governors present 11 June 1739.

'S^r John Harpur Baronet, Geo. Moore Esq., William Browne Esq., The Rev^d Mr. Geo. Gell and John Moore Esq.

'S^r John Harpur with the consent of the rest of the governors present does appoint Monday the 16th day of July next for the election of a Latin Master in the Room of the Rev^d Mr. Sam^l Martin M.A. who has resigned his said Mastership.

'Ordered

'That Mr. James Gresley English Master give immediate notice thereof in Writing to all the govern^{rs} of this School.'

And this is signed by the five governors present. Next to this comes the following :

'Governors Present July 16 1739, S^r John Harpur Bart., George Moore and William Browne Esquires and the Rev. Mr. Geo. Gell.

'Whereas Mr. Samuel Martin Latin Master of Appleby School did give Notice to the governors of the said school on the audit day being June 11 1738 that he would resign his place of Latin Master that day twelve months which he did accordingly at 11 o'clock the same day being the general audit day and time appointed by the

Statutes for the choice of a Master And whereas Mr. Thomas Mould a Founder's near kinsman did then offer himself a candidate for the said school and only five Governors then met so that an election could not at that time be statutably made And Whereas a further day was then agreed upon by the said five Governors The Senior Governor Sir John Harpur Bart being one of that Number for the making the election namely the 16th day of July following Immediate notice whereof was given to all the absent Governors And Whereas no more than four Governors are now met on this 16th day of July (one of the Governors of the Founder's name being ill) and no election can yet be statutably made Tho' the Business of the school in a great measure stands still and its Reputation suffers much We the said four Governors do desire that our Visitor The R^t Rev^d The Lord Bishop of Lincoln be made acquainted therewith into whose hands in case of Neglect of the choice of a master by the said Gov^{rs} the Nomination of Master by the statutes of the said school devolves And we do humbly beg leave to recommend to his Lordship's Favour the above mentioned Mr. Mould as a near Relative of the said Founder whom the statutes of that school give a preference to all other candidates in case he is qualified which we really believe him to be and which we entirely submit to his Lordship's judgment.

'Ordered The above mentioned Governors being Present that Three pounds be allowed Mr. Gresley The English Mast^r for providing a dinner for this day.'

From the extreme stateliness of this entry it is plain what importance the five governors attached to the occasion, for Mr. John Moore was evidently still one of them, being only absent through illness and probably knowing how the meeting was to end. From the list of governors in June 1739 kindly supplied me by Mr. H. J. Ford, one of the present governors of the school, there would seem at that time to have been only eleven and not thirteen, or probably twelve, as the above John Moore is not included in the list; so apparently it was seven against five. Of course we cannot know that all of the seven were hoping to support Johnson, but it may be noticed that Lord Gower's letter was written on August 1, exactly a fortnight after the above meeting which they had declined to attend. He points out to his Irish friend that 'the election cannot be delayed beyond the 11th of next month,' which would be just three months from the annual audit day of June 11. A vexing part of the transaction is that the Minute Book does not show whether the bishop did actually interpose in the appointment.

There is no entry until the following June 11, 1740, which merely states that on the decease of ' John Wylde Gent., Wrightson Mundy Esq. of Osbaston was appointed governor in his place. Ordered that Mr. Thomas Mould Latin Master shall wait on the said Mr. Mundy to acquaint him therewith.' So Mr. Mould at any rate secured the appointment. I have omitted to trace the kinship of this Mr. Mould to the founder, Sir John Moore, but he was probably as near as nephew, for Sir John's sister Sarah married Henry Mould of Nottingham, who died in 1715, and it was to a son of theirs that Sir John left his whole fortune, of about £80,000, on condition of his taking the name of Moore. But the name of Mould had been associated with Appleby itself for centuries, and, as Mr. Ford tells me, another Mr. Mould was Latin master as late as 1863 and onwards.

As I have given the names of the governors supporting Mr. Mould, I must add those of the ' worthy gentlemen ' who seemed to form the Johnsonian party. These were Sir Thomas Gresley, Bart., Sir Robert Burdett, Bart., Christopher Horton, Theodore William Inge, John Wylde, George Clarke, and Thomas Gresley, Esquires. All these gentlemen resided more or less in the neighbourhood of Appleby, which is situated in the west corner of Leicestershire, at the point where it meets three other counties, those of Derby, Warwick, and Stafford. Indeed, Nichols in his account of Appleby states that the parish is partly in Derbyshire, and so ill defined ' that even its own inhabitants do not exactly know the boundaries of the counties, there being no direct meer between them.' The kitchen chimney of the Three Tuns Inn, he adds, is in Leicestershire, the other part of the house being in Derbyshire. And about a mile south-west, where the four counties by old tradition were said to meet, was, in his day, a small parcel of waste land ' called No Man's Heath, from its being at least extremely doubtful in what lordship or even county it lies.' Even still Appleby nestles very snugly under its elm trees, a mile from the high road from Tamworth to Burton-on-Trent, and about midway between these two places. Through several channels the young Johnson would be personally known in the district, as well as through his book-selling father. He had already visited his young friend, the later Dr. Taylor, at Ashbourne, and made acquaintance with the Aston and other county families. And, as likely as anything, the ever-helpful Gilbert Walmsley may have been prime mover in the matter. But there was the insuperable obstacle. No degree was

to be obtained, so the best efforts of friends could carry it no further. I am not aware that Johnson himself has made any reference to the project. We may be sure it was a movement of despair, for he had abundantly proved to himself his own unfitness for the post he was so anxious to obtain.

In pursuing these investigations it came as an additional interest to find that if Johnson had secured this appointment he would once more have been in the atmosphere, so to speak, of his old patron Sir Wolstan Dixie of Market Bosworth. The parish of Appleby consists of two villages or manors, known respectively as Appleby Magna and Parva. The school is situated in the latter part, which was the property of the Moores. But, oddly enough, I found that the manor of Great Appleby was purchased by a former Sir Wolstan Dixie, who was knighted in 1604 and whose son was created a baronet, and who gave it 'with the royalty thereof to the trustees of the free grammar school which his great-uncle had founded at Market Bosworth, and in their possession it still remains.' When taking his boys to church, seated at the west end in that ' commodious gallery erected by Sir John Moore, Knt. for the scholars of the free school founded by him in this parish,' it is to be feared reminiscences would be too strong for Johnson, and the futility of the whole adventure would sadly mar the devoutness with which he was striving to enter into the service. So with Boswell we may as well be satisfied that he failed in getting the appointment, as Johnson himself, no doubt was, if in later years he ever gave a thought to the project. After all his trials, we know with what complacency he compared his ultimate position with that of any friend who had vegetated in the security of a fellowship or a country benefice. Of course, had he obtained the post, he might in the disorder of that early state of his life have been tempted to take orders, for all the headmasters recorded were clergymen as well as M.A.'s, including Mr. Thomas Mould who triumphed over him. Such a step as this, we may be sure, Johnson eventually would have deplored more deeply, for, devout as he was constitutionally, he always recognised that he was no better fitted for a parson than a schoolmaster.

Still, those who are fond of extra-illustrating will regret that there is no more direct association of Johnson with this delightfully old-world spot. As is the way with all our old parishes, having been drawn to it by one particular interest you are rewarded with many additional ones. I cannot, of course, enter into these here,

beyond a brief reference to the Moat House estate, by which name the property transferred to the Market Bosworth school is known. This represents the old manorial property of Appleby Magna, and gets its name from the fourteenth-century manor-house still standing with much of its original moat. It was the residence of the ancient family of the Applebys, once lords here, from whom it passed on through other hands to William Brereton, who in 1603 was said to hold the manor *in capite*, i.e. from the crown, and from whom Sir Wolstan Dixie bought it. As before mentioned, the whole royalty was transferred to the Bosworth school trustees, and in the 1771 Inclosure Act of the open fields and commons in Appleby the governors of that school are described as lords of the manor, whilst Charles Moore, Esq., is lord of the manor of Little Appleby. The waste enclosed cannot have been of any great extent, since both these lordships had only allotted to each 'a portion of the clear yearly value of 40s.' The delightfully named No Man's Heath, referred to above, was not included in the Act, so one might have hoped to find that here at least 'for many miles about there's scarce a bush.' But there was to be no such good fortune. The whistle of the wind on the heath has gone; tormentil and wild thyme have given place to coal dust and ashes. I found that the name of the place has been degraded to Nomans Heath, without even an apostrophe, and the spot has adapted itself to its new name. It was never legally enclosed, but I learned that squatters had gradually filched the ground from about a century ago. In the course of that time the heath has developed into a dusky, brick-built hamlet with even a brick church and vicarage. Nearly all the original hovels have disappeared, and the more recent houses and cottages have been shot down by the side of the busy, tarred high road, whence four or five byways radiate between the hedgerows towards the church spires around. All of them fall away to lower lands except on the south; this one, known as the Salt Street, overgrown with bramble and briar, mounting a hill to drop on the other side to the secluded village of Appleby. This is the hill that Nichols calls Meg of the Hill, shortened now to Meg's Hill, but I could get from nobody any legendary glimpse of the Meg who has left her name here.

Remote as the spot seems even in these days, and under these changes, what would it have been in 1739 to the ardent temperament of the young Johnson? Appleby is still buried under its elm trees, as I have said, mostly of that great pendulous kind known as the wych elm, but they must be nothing to what formerly

grew here. The parish was famous in the district for this species of elm under the name of nave elm, for it was considered the most durable, and the wheelwrights of the neighbourhood sought it. But what would all these rural concerns have availed Johnson for the loss even of the 'very good company' at the Pine Apple? He was once flattered by a lady remarking that under bucolic circumstances he would have learned to talk of 'runts,' but that was at a time when he could not by any possibility be condemned to such circumstances as a source of livelihood. At the age of twenty-nine we know it would have been very different, and when he confronted a band of playful and refractory boys under that august statue of the Lord Mayor, Sir John Moore, which presides over the east end of the Latin master's schoolroom, no such exemplary philosophy could have long sustained him. The *Gentleman's Magazine* would periodically have made its devious way to Appleby by the Ashby-de-la-Zouch and Burton-on-Trent coach, and it is not difficult to imagine what visions of St. John's Gate it would have aroused, and what letters and proposals to Mr. Cave it would have prompted. Such a man's destiny is not to be avoided. He had as yet but touched the fringe of all the sufferings which were to establish his fame, had yet to learn by far the greater part of those

'ills the scholar's life assail,
Toil, envy, want, the patron, and the gaol.'

This Appleby school, however, marked his last attempt to evade them. From that day he recognised his lot, and we know how manfully it was to be confronted in what, after that tossing at Mull, he called in retrospect 'the ordinary course of a literary life.'

ALGERNON GISSING.

WATER-DIVINING: SCIENTIFIC AND COMMERCIAL.

THE art of water-divining is as old as the hills ; so old that it seems strange that it has not yet yielded all its secrets to man.

Several eminent scientists in this country and in France have carried out investigations in divining, but up to the present they have not solved its main problem. This is at once apparent when it is known that the scientists themselves do not agree in their explanation of divining.

By what means does running water cause the involuntary movement of a hazel twig in the hands of a few people, and why does it have no effect on others ? The late Sir William Barrett believed the explanation to be ' psychical, not physical.' Sir William thought that a good diviner possessed an unconscious supernormal perceptive power—seeing as it were without eyes, and he compared it to the homing and migratory instinct of birds.

It seems possible that the gift of divining might be a lost animal sense buried deep beneath the superstructure of civilisation. Many animals possess a sense of water and of direction, unknown to the average human being, and, when their usual water supplies have dried up, they have been known to travel miles over unfamiliar country, following an instinct which unerringly led them to water. They have also been observed to congregate together in desert places, on a spot where water was known to be beneath the surface.

Another more recent investigator, Dr. A. H. Church, holds a different view. Writing in 1922 he said : ' For practical purposes it does not matter how the diviner feels the pull of running water ; that some effect may be perceived is accepted. The effect is entirely muscular, not mental, and has nothing to do with psychical research . . . such muscle and nerve response may be left to the physiologist.'

The scientist and the diviner are in complete agreement as to what occurs when the diviner is in the presence of running water ; he feels a nervous response in his muscles and the rod turns involuntarily in his hands. Clearly, as Dr. Church remarks, ' one does not do this for fun or voluntarily.' Anyone, of course, can make the point of a V-shaped stick turn in this manner, but, says Dr. Church, ' the difference is easily checked on holding the dowser's wrists, the strength of the involuntary movement being sufficient

to lift another person off his feet.' Sir William Barrett points out that 'men of distinction, of high rank, Church dignitaries and others were unable to restrain the movements of the forked twig, and abundant water had been found at the places they indicated.'

Contrary to what has been said in a previous article, Sir William Barrett did *not* hold the view that the successful diviner was dependent on conscious or subconscious detection of water from the surface indications of the ground. He tested this hypothesis and it broke down. 'The diviner's success is not due to the detection of surface signs of water, for ignorant country folk and quite young children are no less successful as dowsers.'

We have now presented the widely different theories of two eminent scientists, both of them Fellows of the Royal Society. It is obvious that, though facts of considerable importance have been brought to light, no satisfactory scientific explanation of water-divining at present exists. There is always a missing link. It may be accepted without dispute that there is an intimate connection between running water and an involuntary nervous muscular response on the part of the diviner, but *how does that connection take place?*

Sir William Preece, an electrician, considered that divining had nothing whatever to do with electric or magnetic phenomena. He had a theory that the unconscious muscular action was due to 'mechanical vibration set up by the friction of moving water, acting upon the sensitive central diaphragm of certain exceptionally delicately framed persons. That moving water restrained by gravel, pipes, hose, etc., sets up vibrations is patent to anyone who will stand on the pier of a bridge, or places his finger on a hose or tongue on a pipe through which water is flowing.' Unfortunately Sir William was not able experimentally to test his theory.

In his book on Psychical Research, Sir William Barrett quotes several striking instances of the success of water-diviners, and he gives an interesting account of some severe tests to which an amateur diviner was submitted by Sir John Franks, C.B., an experienced lawyer and a former Secretary to the Irish Land Commission. Sir John wanted water on his estate in Kilkenny, on which there were some old disused wells; there was nothing on the surface to show where they were. He imported a diviner who was a stranger to him and who had never been in the place before. When the diviner arrived, Sir John said 'he quartered the ground backwards and forwards like a dog looking for game'—found the

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direction of flow of the water, and followed it steadily until he hit off the place where the concealed wells were. In one place where the diviner indicated a site for a well, there were no surface indications, and it was quite half a mile away from any of the old wells. After cutting and blasting through 30 feet of solid rock, a spring was 'struck and soon afterwards there was 20 feet of water in the well.'

In cases of this kind where water was required for the estate, no unnecessary expense is incurred in sinking wells. Sir William Barrett, however, conducted some rather costly boring operations in Ireland solely for experimental purposes. He wished to compare the reports of two independent diviners on the same spots, as to the existence or non-existence of water. Accordingly he selected a site for his experiment on a lonely mountain in County Wicklow, where the most shrewd observer could not possibly predict beforehand the presence or absence of underground water in any particular place. Sir William then sent for a Lincolnshire water-diviner, who indicated two spots where he said water would be found, and another place where he said water would not be found. Another diviner was tried a few weeks later who knew nothing of the tests which had previously taken place, and his indications coincided with those of the first diviner. Bores were then put down, and in both places where the diviners said there was water, it was found. On the other spot where an absence of water was reported, boring operations were continued for a week without success.

We may then accept without question certain results of scientific investigation which, briefly, may be stated to be these. The divining rod moves as a result of involuntary muscular action. Our conscious self speaks through various voluntary muscular movements, ideas chiefly expressing themselves through articulate language. Behind the conscious self lies the background of our personality which reveals itself through involuntary muscular actions which usually are too small to be perceptible. Some instrumental means is therefore necessary to render visible these unconscious external movements. Professor Barrett, Professor Janet, and Dr. Church find that the nervous muscular response takes place independently of any conscious volition on the part of the operator. It is not yet known by what means the stimulus of running water reaches the diviner, and experiments have proved that unconscious visual perception is not the solution, for a diviner can find water when he is blindfolded.

In the course of our professional work, we have carried out a number of interesting experiments which have not yet been scientifically tested.

In 1923 Mr. Timms investigated the question as to whether water could be found without direct contact with the earth. He went up in an aeroplane and flew over Oxford, and found that the rod turned when he passed over the River Cherwell and others in the neighbourhood. Another experiment made in the Severn Tunnel, where there was a huge volume of water flowing over the diviner's head, had an unexpected result: the rod did not move a fraction of an inch! Neither is there any response in the rod if the diviner is in a horizontal position, lying on his back, on his stomach, or flat on a table.

One of the most interesting pieces of work we have so far undertaken is a scheme to map out two large areas of underground rivers and streams. One of these areas lies round Oxford and the other is near Leamington in Warwickshire. Working independently in our respective areas, we have made similar discoveries as to the formation and nature of underground rivers. An experienced diviner is able approximately to gauge the depth, width, and volume of water passing in an underground stream at a given point. He does this either by his own estimation of the strength of the muscular reaction or by means of a spring balance attached to the rod. Mr. Timms was most fortunate in being able to obtain the collaboration of Dr. Church in his work at Oxford. Dr. Church kept the records of the spring-balance, and from these were produced some interesting graphs showing the diminution of impetus from the central 'pull' at 10, 20, 30, and 40 yards on each side of the stream. These streams were graded according to their size from 1 to 6 and marked on a 6-inch survey map. It then appeared that they were linked up into regular underground systems, and these results were confirmed by Miss Hyacinthe Daly both in Oxfordshire and Warwickshire. Near Leamington one of the streams gave a peculiar reaction, and on tracing this stream Miss Daly found it led under the town, there to emerge in various mineral springs which have gained for Leamington its reputation as a Spa.

Among a diviner's trade secrets are the methods of distinguishing sulphur streams and salt water from drinking water. It is most important to be able to do this, as otherwise much time and money might be spent in sinking wells to bring up water which

proved to be unfit for drinking—besides, both sulphur and salt have a commercial value.

Admittedly, the status of the water-diviner is not as good as it ought to be. There is no examination, no university training course by which one may become qualified for divining. Handicapped by the lack of organised research and accepted methods of training, the diviner often has an up-hill task.

In order to become a professional diviner, training is absolutely essential. Nobody with a slight gift for music would attempt to sit down and give a public exhibition of his talents, and yet this is precisely what the amateur so often tries to do—with disastrous results. Finding water, emphatically, is not an amateur's work ; it requires long and patient training, constant practice and good physical health. Divining is a gift, and cannot be taught to anyone who is not born with it. Like other gifts, some people (probably about one in a thousand) seem to have it to a slight extent, others have it very fully developed, and only these latter should attempt to become professional diviners. However, if Science does not recognise the professional water-diviner, Commerce does.

It is not perhaps generally known that the leading diviners have a large business which keeps them constantly employed. Many estate agents, architects, and engineers call in a reliable diviner to advise them on the sinking of wells as a matter of course. The fees charged for professional advice vary according to the magnitude of the work undertaken, but they are very small in proportion to the amount of capital involved. If diviners were properly organised the fees would no doubt be larger, because where geology has failed divining is the only means of finding the needed water supply. A bore-hole for a large supply of water may cost anything over £1,000 ; a well costs roughly 30s. per foot to dig, according to the price of labour in the locality.

The sceptical may find it hard to believe that the professional diviner really can earn his living by finding water, but it is quite certain that business men would not continue to pay for something they did not get, and the diviner still plies his trade !

Two years ago the water supply of Bath became insufficient for the town, and after considerable discussion the Water Works Committee decided to send for a diviner. A well-known professional man was employed and he found them new springs which increased the water supply by 400,000 gallons *per diem*. This is only one of similar cases which could be cited from a professional diviners'

records. In Australia, where public opinion is not quite so conservative in accepting new ideas, the Department of Public Works, Brisbane, has employed a government water-finder for the past ten years.

The following letters are examples of the kind of communication we frequently receive in connection with our work.

To Miss Hyacinthe Daly, Leamington, Warwickshire.

'The well is finished at 52 feet, and the water is coming in pretty fast, 5 feet in it now. This is most satisfactory. The other well which you will remember at the Lodge (this was a dis-used well; clearing out was advised) has been cleaned out, almost a cartload of rubbish came out, mud, etc., and there is now plenty of water in it.'

'W. J. B.-R., Tetsworth, Oxfordshire.'

To Mr. J. Timms, Oxford.

'I am pleased to report that we found water at C. at a depth of 67 feet and we have now a 9 feet 6 inches head of water in the well. I congratulate you on the extraordinary accuracy of your prediction.'

'Councillor F. B. B., Bexhill.'

To Mr. J. Timms, Oxford.

'I am pleased to inform you that we have got a good supply of water at W. Farm. Since your last visit we cannot lower the water with our own pumps, so we shall have to get some more powerful pumps. This has given great satisfaction'

'L. & Son, Bicester.'

We have said that divining is not an amateur's work, and where failure to find water has followed a diviner's recommendation, two causes are usually responsible. Either an amateur may have been employed, or the engineer may have failed in his part of the business. The diviner is only called upon to locate the water, the engineer is responsible for bringing it to the surface. It will certainly be argued at this point that the engineer cannot bring up what is not there; however, it is possible for a bore to go right through a water-bearing stratum and completely shut out the water it was intended to bring up. This occasionally happens when the engineer does not raise his boring apparatus often enough for an examination of the core or debris, to ascertain whether a water-

bearing stratum has been penetrated. When water is not found at the expected depth the explosion of a charge at the bottom of the hole thoroughly disturbs the surrounding rock and often releases the water supply. Some remarkable results have followed from 'torpedoing' in this way. At a well near Rochester, 300 feet in depth, which refused to yield any water at all, a charge was put down and the explosion immediately released a flow of over 20,000 gallons an hour.

On the other hand, an amateur diviner without sufficient knowledge might very easily indicate a wrong site for a well, quite close to a spring, but not right in the middle of it. Since the influence of running water can be felt for some yards on either side, it is important to determine the exact spot where the flow is strongest, especially in the case of fissure water. Subterranean rivers of various sizes and depths produce different reactions on the rod, reactions which vary in quality and intensity. The amateur feels the pull on his rod but does not know how to interpret it; the trained man does know, and makes his diagnosis of the whereabouts of water accordingly.

Professional diviners often guard their secrets most jealously, handing them down from father to son if the gift be hereditary. In many cases much valuable knowledge must have died with its possessor, and so to-day divining is the Cinderella among professions. Possibly, this state of affairs may be changed in the near future. The organisation of diviners would bring them fuller recognition, and there would follow definite training, specific tests and a recognised qualification. There is ample evidence, both scientific and commercial, to prove that the diviner can find water. From a business point of view, the main issue is not *how* he does it (this we must leave to Science), but whether he is sufficiently accurate in his estimations to accord him the status of a professional.

We submit that a trained diviner has as high a percentage of successes in his undertakings as any other professional, and we are ready at any time to support our statement by practical demonstration.

HYACINTHE DALY.

JOHN TIMMS.

Professional Water-Diviners.

*THE TISSUE-CULTURE KING.**

BY JULIAN HUXLEY.

We had been for three days engaged in crossing a swamp, not a swamp a few acres in extent, but a swamp the size of Yorkshire. We waded doggedly through mud and water over our knees, miles of it, with the great reeds shutting out all view and impeding every step. Heat, mosquitoes, flies, mud, reeds—and so on throughout the day, lucky if we found a camping place that raised itself a foot out of the steamy mess.

At last we were out on firm, dry ground, winding up a gentle slope that was dotted with big trees and patches of brush. Near the top we saw that the brush grew thicker; it loomed up before us like a fortification. This look of a rampart grew as we approached; it had the air of having been deliberately planted by men, and barred our path with a dense tangle of thorny branches. We did not wish to have to hack our way through the spiky barricade with axes if it were not necessary, so turned to the right along the front of the green wall. After three or four hundred yards there was a clearing which led into the bush—a broad clearing, and narrowing down to what seemed a regular passage or trackway. This made us alert and a little suspicious. However, I thought we had better make all the progress we could, and so ordered the caravan to turn into the opening, myself taking second place behind the guide and tracker in the front.

Suddenly the tracker stopped and, with a guttural exclamation, pointed to the ground ahead. I looked, and there was one of the great African toads, hopping with a certain ponderosity across the path. But it was not an ordinary toad: it had a second head growing vertically upwards from its shoulders. So far as I could judge, this second head was smaller and darker than the one occupying a head's rightful place. I had never seen anything like this before, and wanted to secure such a remarkable monstrosity for our collections; but as I moved forward, the creature took a couple of hops and was away into the shelter of the prickly scrub. I saw the glint of one of his supernumerary eyes for a moment, and then he was lost to view.

We pushed on, and I became more and more convinced that the gap we were following was artificial, a man-made path. I spoke

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to the tracker about it, and he agreed. We therefore gave orders to the porters to be very quiet, and went on slowly and with caution. After a little, a sound came to our ears, a droning sound, which we very soon set down as that of a human voice. The party was halted, and I crept forward with the guide. The bushes rapidly began to grow smaller, and suddenly with a twist of the path we came in sight of open sky before us. Peeping through the last screen of brush we looked down into a hollow and were immeasurably startled at what we saw there. The voice proceeded from an enormous negro man, the biggest man I had ever seen outside a circus, a man at least seven foot six or eight foot high. He was squatting, from time to time prostrating the forepart of his body and with outstretched arms touching the ground; and the droning sound of his voice was due to his being obviously engaged in reciting some prayer or incantation. The object of his devotion was before him on the ground. It was a flat piece of glass held on a little carved ebony stand by a support at either end. It looked to me about the size and shape of a microscope slide, but I could not be sure of any details. By his side was a spear suitable for one of his stature, together with a painted basket with a lid.

My friend the guide looked surprised (and not altogether happy!) at the sight. I motioned to him to keep perfectly still so that we might find out a little more before coming to any decision.

After a minute or so, the giant bowed down in silence for a considerable time, then took up the ebony and glass object and placed it in the basket. Then to my utter amazement he put his hand in and drew out a two-headed toad like the first I had seen, but in a cage of woven grass; placed it on the ground, and proceeded to more genuflections and ritual murmurings. But this was soon over, the toad too was replaced in the basket, and the giant, squatting on his hams, with his spear held vertically before him as an aid to balance, tranquilly regarded the landscape.

The tranquillity, however, did not last long. Beyond the hollow or dell lay an undulating country, the view over which was much obscured by clumps of bush. A sound in the middle distance attracted attention; glimpses of colour moved through the scrub; and a party of three or four dozen men was seen approaching. Most of them were as gigantic as our first acquaintance; all marched in order, armed with great spears, and wearing coloured loin straps with a sort of sporran, it seemed, in front and scraps of

leopard-fur sewn to them. They were preceded by an intelligent-looking negro of ordinary stature armed with a mace or club. He was accompanied by two figures more extraordinary than the giants. They were under-sized, almost dwarfish, with huge heads, and enormously fat and brawny both in face and body. They wore bright yellow cloaks over their black shoulders, and their sporran-like adornments were much larger than those of the giants. In their hands they carried some sort of staff which looked more ceremonial than military.

At sight of them, our giant rose and stood stiffly by the side of his basket. I could now see that his dress was like that of the rest of the giants, and that the apparent sporran was a veritable cod-piece, made of a large yellow gourd and tasselled with goat-beards—a strange ornament!

The party approached, halted, and the intelligent-looking fellow spoke to our giant, who replied. Some order, apparently, was then given, a giant stepped out from the ranks towards ours, who picked up the basket, handed it stiffly to the new-comer, and fell into place in the little company.

We were clearly witnessing some regular routine of relieving guard, and I was racking my brains to think what the whole thing might signify—guards, giants, dwarfs, toads—when to my dismay I heard a very inadequately stifled exclamation at my shoulder.

It was one of those damned porters, a confounded fellow who always liked to show his independence (and incidentally his lack of sense). Bored with waiting, I suppose, he had self-importantly crept up to see what it was all about, and the sudden sight of the company of giants had been too much for his nerves.

I snatched at his arm and made a signal to lie quiet, but it was too late. The exclamation had been heard; the leader gave a quick command, and the thirty-odd giants had rushed up and out in two groups to surround us.

Violence and resistance was clearly out of the question. I might have killed four or five, but that would have been no good. With my heart in my mouth, but as much nonchalance and dignity as I could muster, I accordingly jumped up and threw out my empty hands, at the same time telling the tracker to keep still and not to shoot. A dozen spears seemed towering over me, but none were launched. The leader ran up the slope, gave a command and smiled at me. Two giants came up and put my hands through

their arms. The tracker and the porter were herded in front at the spear-point.

The other porters now discovered there was something amiss, and began to shout and run away, with half the spearmen after them. We three were gently but firmly marched down and across the hollow with half a dozen giants, the leader and the dwarfs.

I understood nothing of the language, and called to my tracker to try his hand with our captor. It turned out that there was some dialect of which both had a little understanding, but we could get very little out of the conversation save the fact that our lives were in no immediate danger, and that we were being taken to some superior authority.

For two days we were marched through pleasant park-like country, with villages at intervals showing signs of considerable prosperity. Every now and then some new monstrosity in the shape of a dwarf or an incredibly fat woman or a two-headed animal would be visible, until I thought I had stumbled on the original source of supply of all circus freaks.

The country at last began to slope gently down to a pleasant river-valley ; and presently it was clear that we were near some important settlement. It turned out to be a really large town for Africa, its mud walls of strangely impressive architectural form, with their heavy, slabby buttresses. More giants stood at intervals on these walls. Seeing us approach, they shouted, and a crowd poured out of the nearest gate. My God, what a crowd ! I was getting used to giants by this time, but here was a regular Barnum and Bailey show ; more semi-dwarfs ; others like them but more so—one could not tell whether the creatures were precociously mature children or horribly stunted adults ; others portentously fat, with arms like sooty legs of mutton, and rolls and volutes of fat crisping out of their steatopygous posteriors ; still others, real dwarfs of the Tom Thumb type ; others precociously senile and wizened ; others hateful and imbecile in looks. Of course, there were plenty of ordinary negroes too, but enough of the extraordinary to make one feel pretty queer. Soon after we got inside, I suddenly noted something else which made me feel queer—a telephone wire, with perfectly good insulators, running across the village from tree to tree. A telephone—in an undiscovered village in equatorial Africa ! I gave it up.

But another and equal surprise was in store for me. We had turned up a sort of avenue towards some central group of buildings

when I saw a figure pass across from one of these buildings to another—a figure which was unmistakably that of a white man. In the first place, it was wearing white ducks and sun helmet; in the second, it had a pale face. It was a very reassuring sight.

He turned at the sound of our cavalcade and stood looking a moment; then walked towards us.

'Halloo!' I shouted. 'Do you speak English?'

'Yes,' he answered, 'but keep quiet a moment,' and began talking quickly to our leaders, who treated him with the greatest deference.

He dropped back to me and spoke rapidly: 'You are to be taken into the council hall to be examined by the king: but I will see to it that no harm comes to you. This is a forbidden land to strangers, and you must be prepared to have your party held up for a time. You will be sent down to see me in the temple buildings as soon as the formalities are over, and I'll explain things. They want a bit of explaining,' he added with a dry, self-satisfied laugh. 'By the way, my name is Hascombe, lately research worker at the Middlesex, now chief religious adviser to His Majesty King Mgobe.' He laughed again and pushed ahead. He was an interesting figure—perhaps fifty or fifty-five years old, spare body, thin face, with a small brown beard speckled with grey, and rather sunken, hazel eyes. As for his expression, I could not quite make it out; he looked cynical—tired and bored—but also as if he was interested in life. He said he had been a research worker—well, it was the look one sees on the faces of research workers who have got hold of a good thing. But he could not very well be doing research!

By this time we were at the entrance to the hall—a rather large circular building. Our giants formed up outside the door, with my men behind them, and only I and the leader and a couple of guards passed in.

I shall not trouble my readers with the examination: it was purely formal, and remarkable chiefly for the ritual and solemnity which characterised all the actions of the couple of dozen seated figures—fine-looking men in long robes—who were our examiners. My men were herded off to some compound. I was escorted down to a little hut, furnished with some attempt at European style, where I found Hascombe.

As soon as we were alone I was after him with my questions. 'Now you can tell me. Where are we? What is the meaning of all this circus business and this menagerie of monstrosities?

and how do you come here ?' He cut me short. 'It's a long story, so let me save time by telling it my own way.'

I am not going to tell it as he told it: but will try to give a more connected account, the result of many later talks with him, and of my own observations.

Hascombe had been a medical student of great promise; and after his degree had launched out into research. He had first started on parasitic protozoa, but had given that up in favour of tissue-culture; from these had gone off to cancer research, and from that to a study of developmental physiology. Some time afterwards, however, one of the big Commissions on sleeping sickness had been organised, and Hascombe, restless and eager for travel, had pulled wires and, on the strength of his early training and general record, got himself appointed as one of the scientific staff. He was much impressed with the view that wild game acted as a reservoir for the *Trypanosoma gambiense*. When he learnt of the extensive migrations of game, he saw here an important possible means of spreading the disease, and asked leave to go up country to investigate the extent of the migrations and the degree in which the disease was spread by this means. When the Commission as a whole had finished its work, he was allowed to go off with two other white men and a company of porters to see what he could discover. One of the two whites was a laboratory technician, a sturdy and rather taciturn N.C.O. of science called Aggers; the other, called Shardin, a medical missionary who was entrusted with the duty of carrying a whole load of medical stores to a mission station half-way across the continent, and, being a keen fellow, begged and secured leave to accompany the party as far as their roads lay together.

There is no object in telling of their experiences here. Suffice it that they lost their way and fell into the hands of this same tribe. That was fifteen years ago: and both of the other whites were now long dead—Aggers as the result of a wound inflicted when he was caught, after a couple of years, trying to escape; and the missionary, after brooding ineffectually for a year or two longer, was carried off by fever—'and a good riddance too,' said Hascombe brutally; 'his wretched conscience prevented him settling down here.'

On their capture, they had been conducted into the same council chamber in which we had been examined, and Hascombe (who had interested himself in a dilettante way in anthropology

as in most other subjects of scientific inquiry) was much impressed by what he described as the exceedingly religious atmosphere. Everything was done with an elaboration of ceremony; the chief seemed more priest than king, and performed various rites at intervals during the proceedings, and priests were busy at some sort of altar or shrine the whole time.

Among other things, he noticed that one of their rites was connected with blood. First the chief and then the councillors were in turn requisitioned for a drop of vital fluid pricked from their finger-tips, and the mixture, held in a little vessel, slowly evaporated over a flame.

Some of Hascombe's men spoke a dialect not unlike that of their captors, and one was acting as interpreter. Things did not look too favourable. The country was a 'holy place,' it seemed, and the tribe a 'holy race.' Other Africans who trespassed there, if not killed, were enslaved, but for the most part they let well alone, and did not trespass. White men they had heard of, but never seen till now, and the debate was what to do—to kill, or to let go, or to enslave. To let them go was contrary to all their principles: the holy place would be defiled if the news of it were spread abroad. To enslave them—yes; but what were they good for? and the Council seemed to feel an instinctive dislike and fear for these other-coloured creatures.

Hascombe had an idea. He turned to the interpreter. 'Say this: "You revere the Blood. So do we white men; but we do more—we can render visible the blood's hidden nature and reality, and with permission I will show this great magic." ' Without waiting, however, for the permission, he beckoned to the bearer who carried his precious microscope, took it out of its case, set it up, drew a drop of blood from the tip of his finger with his knife, mounted it on a slide under a coverslip, and inserted it under the objective.

The interpreter had delivered his message, and the big-wigs were obviously interested. They whispered to each other. At length, 'Show us,' commanded the chief.

Hascombe demonstrated his preparation with greater interest than he had ever done to first-year medical students in the old days. He explained that the blood was composed of little people of various sorts, each with their own lives, and that to spy upon them thus gave us new powers over them.

The elders were more or less impressed. At any rate the sight

of these thousands of corpuscles where they could see nothing before made them think, made them realise that the white man had power which might make him a desirable servant.

They would not ask to have their own blood made visible, for fear that the sight would put them into the power of those who saw it. But they had blood drawn from a slave. Hascombe asked too for a bird, and was able to create a certain interest by showing how different were the little people of its blood.

'Tell them,' he said to the interpreter, 'that I have many other powers and magics which I will show them if they will give me time.'

The long and short of it was that he and his party were spared. he said he knew now what you felt like when the magistrate said, 'Remanded for a week.'

He had been attracted by one of the elder statesmen of the tribe—a tall, powerful-looking man of middle-age; and was agreeably surprised when this man came round next day to see him. Hascombe later nicknamed him the Prince-Bishop, for his combination of the qualities of the statesman and the ecclesiastic: his real name was Bugala. He was as anxious to discover more about Hascombe's mysterious powers and resources as Hascombe was to learn what he could of the people into whose hands he had fallen, and they met almost every evening and talked far into the night.

Hascombe found his first impressions confirmed. The place was a theocracy, in which religion was paramount—the one driving force and regulator of society—and his busy mind kept revolving in the attempt to turn this discovery to his own safety and profit.

Bugala's inquiries were as little prompted as Hascombe's by a purely academic curiosity. Impressed himself by his glimpse through the microscope, and still more by the effect which it had had on the mind of his colleagues, he came to Hascombe anxious to find out whether by utilising the powers of the white man he could not secure his own advancement.

To cut a long story short, they at length struck a bargain. Bugala would see to it that no harm befell Hascombe. But Hascombe must put his resources and powers at the disposal of the Council; and he, Bugala, would take good care to arrange matters so that he himself benefited. So far as Hascombe could make out, the black ecclesiastic imagined a radical change in the type of the national religion, a sort of reformation based on Hascombe's conjuring tricks; and that he himself would emerge as the High Priest of this changed system.

Hascombe had a sense of humour, and it was tickled. It seemed pretty clear that they could not escape, at least for the present. That being so, why not take the opportunity of doing a little research work at state expense—an opportunity which, after all, he and his like were always clamouring for at home? His thoughts began to run away with him. He would find out all he could of the rites and superstitions of the tribe. He would, by the aid of his knowledge and his scientific skill, exalt the details of these rites, the expression of those superstitions, the whole physical side of their religiosity, on to a new level which should to them appear truly miraculous. He would thus foster the episcopal black's ambitions, and at the same time would treat himself to an orgy of endowed research on the grand scale.

It would not be worth my troubling to tell all the negotiations—the false starts, the misunderstandings. In the end he secured what he wanted—the erection of a building which could be used as a laboratory; the enlistment of an unlimited supply of slaves for the lower, and priests for the higher duties of collecting and of laboratory assistance, and the promise that when the missionary stores had been exhausted they would do their best to secure others from the coast—a promise which was scrupulously kept, so that he never went short for lack of what money could buy.

He next applied himself diligently to a study of their religion and found that it was built round various main *motifs*. Of these perhaps, the central one was the belief in the divinity and tremendous importance of the Priest-King, diagrammatic enough to have rejoiced the heart of Sir James Frazer. The second was a form of ancestor-worship. The third was an animal cult, a cult in particular of the more grotesque species of the African fauna. The fourth was sex, *con variazioni*.

Hascombe reflected on these facts. Tissue culture; experimental embryology; endocrine treatment; artificial parthenogenesis—such were the thoughts that passed through his mind. He laughed and said to himself 'Well, I can but try; and it ought to be amusing.'

That was how it all started. Perhaps the best way of giving some idea of how it had developed will be for me to tell my own impressions when Hascombe took me round his laboratories in the next few days. One whole quarter of the town was devoted entirely to religion; it struck me as excessive, but Hascombe reminded me that Tibet spends one-fifth of its revenues on melting

butter to burn before its shrines. Facing on the main square was the chief temple, built impressively enough of solid mud, with palm-thatched colonnades surrounding it. On either side were rows and rows of low buildings—the apartments where dwelt the servants of the gods and administrators of the sacred rites. Behind, connected by a covered way of mud with the temple, were Hascombe's laboratories, some built of mud, others, under his later guidance, of wood. They were protected by a high wall, guarded night and day by patrols of giants, and were arranged in a series of quadrangles. Within one quadrangle was a pool which served as an aquarium; in another, aviaries and great hen-houses; in yet another, cages with various animals; in the fourth a little botanic garden. Behind were stables and farmyards with dozens of cattle and sheep, and a sort of hospital or experimental ward for human beings.

He took me into the nearest of the buildings. 'This,' he said, 'is known to the people as the Factory (it is difficult to give the exact sense of the word, but it literally means producing-place), the Factory of Kingship or Majesty, and the Well-spring of Ancestral Immortality.' I looked round, and saw platoons of buxom and shining African women, becomingly but unusually dressed in tight-fitting white dresses and white caps, and many of them wearing rubber gloves. Microscopes were much in evidence, as also various receptacles from which steam was emerging. A few feet at the back of the room were screened off by a wooden screen in which were placed a whole series of glass doors; and these doors opened into partitions each prominently labelled with a name in that unknown tongue, and each containing a number of objects apparently like the one I had seen taken out of the basket by the giant before we were captured. Pipes surrounded this chamber, and appeared to be distributing heat from a fire in one corner of the room.

'Factory of majesty!' I exclaimed. 'Well-spring of immortality! What the dickens do you mean, and what the dickens do you do here?'

'If you prefer a more prosaic name,' said Hascombe, 'or I should say a more prosaic-sounding, for the reality is no less romantic, I should call this the Institute of Religious Tissue-Culture.' As he spoke, my mind went back to the days of the war, when I happened to have been sent over to the United States on one of the innumerable technical missions which purported either to learn so much from or to impart so much to the Americans in 1917 and 1918. In New York I had been taken by a biological friend to

see the famous Rockefeller Institute, and at the word tissue-culture I saw again Alexis Carrel, dapper and alert, and troops of white-garbed American girls making cultures and subcultures, sterilising, examining things under microscopes, incubating and the rest of it. The tissue-culture section of the Hascombe Institute was, it is true, not so well equipped, but it had an even larger, if differently coloured, personnel.

The comparison tickled my fancy. However, I was soon pressing for explanations. Hascombe explained rapidly and with a good deal of gesticulation. It must have been a wonderful moment to be able to explain to a new-comer of his own race all his ideas and activities after so long a time.

'As you probably know, Frazer's "Golden Bough" introduced us to the idea of a sacred priest-king, and showed how widespread were the practices based on that idea in all primitive societies. The welfare of the tribe is regarded as inextricably bound up with that of the divine or sacred king, and extraordinary precautions are taken to preserve him from harm. In this kingdom, in the old days, the King was hardly allowed to set foot to the ground in case he should lose divinity; his cut hair and the parings of his nails were entrusted to one of the most important officials of state, whose duty it was to bury them, observing the strictest secrecy, in case some enemy should secure them and compass the King's illness or death by using them in black magic rites, and the performance of this duty was the chief function of the holder of this particular office. If by evil chance any one of base blood trod on the King's shadow, he paid the penalty with his life. Each year a slave was made mock-king for a week, enjoyed (if he so wished) the royal wives, and was decapitated at the close of his brief glory; and by this means it was supposed that the illnesses and misfortunes that had befallen or might befall the King were vicariously got rid of.

'I first of all rigged up my apparatus, and with the aid of Aggers succeeded in getting quite good cultures, first of embryo chick tissues and later, by the aid of embryo extract, of various adult mammalian tissues. I then went to Bugala, and told him that I could increase the safety, if not of the King as an individual, at least of the life which was in him, and that I presumed that this would be equally satisfactory from a theological point of view. I pointed out to him that if he chose to introduce this innovation, and to be made guardian of the King's subsidiary lives, he would be in a much more important position than the chamberlain or the

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burier of the sacred nail-parings, and might eventually make the post the most influential in the realm.

' Eventually I was allowed (under threats of death if anything untoward occurred) to remove small portions of His Majesty's subcutaneous connective tissue under a local anaesthetic. In the presence of the assembled nobility (priest-warrior-elders, in the same way that the chief was a priest-king) I put tiny fragments of this into ready-prepared culture medium, and showed it them under the microscope. The cultures were then put away in the incubator at 98°, under guard of half a dozen warriors, commanded by one of the nobles, and the guard relieved every eight hours. At the end of three days I was allowed to take the slides out and demonstrate them again, and to my joy they had all taken and showed abundant growth through the whole drop. I could see that they were impressed, and reeled off a magnificent speech, in which I pointed out that this growth constituted an actual increase in the quantity of the divine principle inherent in royalty; and what was more, that I could and would proceed to increase it indefinitely. With that I cut each of my cultures into eight, and subcultured all the pieces. They were again put under guard, and again examined after three days. Not all of them had taken this time, and there were some murmurings and angry looks, on the ground that I had killed some of the King; but I pointed out that the King was still the King, that his little wound had completely healed, and that any successful cultures represented so much extra sacredness and protection to the State. I must say that they were very reasonable, and had good theological acumen, for they at once took this point; and I then pressed my advantage home.

' I pointed out to the Bishop, and he managed to persuade the rest without much difficulty, that one could now afford to disregard some of the older implications of the doctrines of kingship. The most important new idea which I was able to introduce may perhaps be summed up in the word *mass-production*. Our aim was to multiply the King's tissues indefinitely, to ensure that some of their protecting power should reside everywhere in the country. Thus, by concentrating upon the idea of quantity, we could afford to remove some of the restrictions upon the King's mode of life. This was of course agreeable to the King; and it was agreeable to Bugala, who saw himself wielding undreamt-of power. One might have supposed that such an innovation would have met with great resistance simply on account of its being an innovation; but I must

admit that these people compared very favourably with the average business man in England in their logical faculties and lack of prejudice. Granted certain premisses, then if you could show them that certain deductions which had previously escaped them could properly be deduced from these premisses, they would accept them and all their consequences.

'Having thus got the principle settled, I had many debates with Bugala as to the best methods for carrying it out, for it was clear that somehow we must enlist the mass of the population in our scheme. Here was the opportunity for scientific advertising. But, unfortunately, the population could not read. However, this was a minor matter. War propaganda worked very well in more or less illiterate countries—why not here ?'

Hascombe organised a series of lectures in the capital, at which he demonstrated his regal tissues to the multitude, who were bidden to the place by royal heralds. Bugala's nephew, a clever young man, was chosen as spokesman, and an impressive platform was always supplied from the ranks of the nobles. The lecturer explained the principles, and pointed out how important it was for the community to become possessed of greater and greater stores of the sacred tissues. Unfortunately, however, the preparation was laborious and expensive, and it behoved them all to lend a hand in the great work. It had accordingly been arranged that to everyone subscribing a cow or buffalo, or its equivalent—three goats, three pigs, or three sheep—a portion of the royal anatomy should be given, handsomely mounted in an ebony holder. Subculturing would be done at certain hours and days and at these times it would be obligatory to send the cultures for renewal. Details were given for the safe keeping of the slides. If through any negligence the tissue died, no renewal would be made. The subscription entitled the receiver to subculturing rights for a year, but was of course renewable. By this means not only would the totality of the King be much increased, to the benefit of all, but each culture-holder would possess an actual part of His Majesty, which would confer individual benefits upon the household, and they would have the infinite joy and privilege of seeing with their own eyes and aiding by their own efforts the multiplication of divinity.

Then there was another way in which they could serve their country, and that was by dedicating a daughter to the service of the State. These young women would be housed and fed by the

State, and taught the technique of the sacred culture. This would demand skill and patience, and, as a great excess of applicants over vacancies was anticipated, appointment would be by a rigid selection. Candidates would be selected according to general fitness and quickness, but would of course, in addition, be required to attain distinction in an examination on the principles of their national religion. They would be appointed for a probationary period of six months, at any time during which they could be sent home if they proved unsuitable. After this they would receive a permanent status, with the title of Sisters of the Sacred Tissue. From this, with age, experience, and merit, they could expect promotion to the rank of mothers, grandmothers, great-grandmothers, and grand ancestresses of the same. The merit and benefit they would receive from their close contact with the source of all benefits would overflow on to their families. Finally, if the plan worked in the capital, they would see whether it could not be applied to the out-lying districts.

The scheme worked like wildfire. Organised appeal, itself a novelty, reinforced the novelty of the idea: a novelty, to an intelligent people living under the dead hand of a rigid system of rules, is itself charming.

Pigs, goats, cattle, buffaloes, and negro maidens poured in. Next year the scheme was extended to the whole country, a peripatetic laboratory making the rounds weekly. Towards the close of the year, Hascombe had another bright idea. As is well known to ethnologists, many African tribes regard the liver as the master-organ of the body. If they could but obtain some strains of royal hepatic tissue, the potency of the appeal would be many times increased.

Bugala was called in and had a long talk with Hascombe, after which he went off to the King. He pointed out to him the advantages to the State which would accrue if the plan were carried out, and assured him that Hascombe guaranteed a painless and safe operation. The King at first hesitated, and then came down heavily in opposition to the project. However, Bugala was in a strong position. He pointed out that they now, under the care of his Department of State, possessed over twenty thousand fragments of the royal connective tissue, and that the collective effect of these could legitimately be regarded as equal to the effect of the King as an individual; further, that if he chose to say the word, an intensive multiplication of the fragments would be begun which would soon

put His Majesty altogether in the shade, and might indeed warrant them in deposing him as an unwarranted complexity and unnecessary expense. Furthermore, if His Majesty thought fit to press his opposition, Bugala would feel obliged to announce to the people that this further scheme of the white man for the safeguarding and prosperity of the nation was being checked by the King's pusillanimous shrinking from the slight sacrifice involved in undergoing the operation. When once the people grasped the meaning of this (and they were intelligent enough to do so pretty quickly), well—and Bugala shrugged his shoulders with a lapse into ominous silence. The King began to bluster and to threaten Bugala with arrest. But the statesman was prepared for this. He told the King that he had given orders that if he did not return safe within a certain time, the cultures and the instruments for making them were to be smashed ; and with them would be smashed the prosperity of the country.

In the end the King gave in. It was announced to the people that he was to sacrifice himself for the common good. Hascombe successfully performed a small laparotomy ; and a vigorous strain of hepatic cells was brought into culture.

The subscription price for this was fixed at double that for connective tissue. In spite of this increase the applications poured in. It was like the first Liberty Loan in the United States. Failure to subscribe, at least for connective tissue, was naturally regarded as unpatriotic and miserly, and public opinion brought its strongest pressure to bear on the defaulters.

By the close of the third year there was hardly a family in the country which did not possess at least one sacred culture. To be without one would have felt like being without one's trousers—or at least without one's hat—in Bond Street.

Thus did Bugala bring off what was in reality a *coup d'état*—at the same time effecting the reformation of the national religion, enthroning himself as the most important personage in the country, and entrenching applied science in general, and Hascombe in particular, firmly in the organisation of the State.

This, however, was not all. Encouraged by his success with the King, Hascombe very soon set out to capture the Ancestry-Worship branch of the religion as well.

A public proclamation was made pointing out how much more satisfactory it would be if worship could be made not merely to the charred bones of one's forbears, but to bits of them still actually

living and growing. Anyone who was desirous of profiting by the enterprise of Bugala's Department of State should therefore bring their older relatives to the laboratory at certain specified hours, and fragments would be painlessly extracted for culture.

This, too, proved very attractive to the average citizen. Occasionally, it is true, grandfathers or aged mothers when brought to the laboratory were in a state of indignation and protest. However, this did not matter, since, according to the law, once children were twenty-five years of age, they were not only assigned the duty of worshipping their ancestors, alive or dead, but were also given complete control over them, in order that all rites might be duly and properly performed to the greater safety and benefit of the commonweal.

Further, the ancestors soon found that the operation itself was trifling, and, what was more, that once accomplished, it had the most desirable results. For their descendants preferred to concentrate at once upon the culture which they would continue to worship after the old folks were gone, and so left their parents and grandparents much freer than before from the irksome restrictions which in all ages and climates have beset the officially holy.

Thus, by the hearth of almost every hut in the kingdom, instead of the old-fashioned 'family urns'—the rows of red pottery jars inscribed with symbolic black designs and each containing the partially incinerated bones of one or other of the family forbears—the new generation saw growing up a collection of family slides. Each would be taken out and reverently examined at the hour of prayer. 'Grandpapa is not growing well this week,' you would perhaps hear the young black *dévote* say; if so, the father of the family would pray and perform incantations over the speck of tissue; and if that failed, it would be taken back to the factory for rejuvenation. On the other hand, what rejoicing when a rhythm of activity stirred in the cultures! A spurt on the part of great-grandmother's tissues would bring her wrinkled old smile to mind again; and sometimes it would seem as if one particular generation were all stirred simultaneously by a pulse of growth, as if combining to try a return to the scenes of their life, or at least to bless their devout descendants.

To deal with the possibility of cultures dying out, Hascombe started a central storehouse, where duplicates of every strain were kept, and it was this repository of the national tissues which had attracted my attention at the back of the laboratory. No such

collection had ever existed before, he assured me. Not a necropolis, but a histopolis, if I may coin a word : not a cemetery, but a place of eternal growth. On the opportunities for scientific investigation which were thus provided he waxed eloquent—the relation between growth-potential of tissue and temperament of individual, of tissue-rhythms and erstwhile mood-recurrences ; but for all this I have no space.

That was enough for one day. Next day he took me into the second building. This was devoted to the manufacture of endocrine products—an African Armour's or Burroughs Wellcome's—and was called by the people the 'Factory of Ministers to the Shrines.'

'Here,' he said, 'you will not find much new. You know the work that was going on at home years ago—or at least I suppose you only know its results, in the shape of pluriglandular preparations, patent medicines with "glands" as their basis, and a popular literature that threatened to outdo the Freudians, and explain the actions of human beings entirely on the basis of glandular make-up, without reference to the mind at all.

'I had only to apply my knowledge in a comparatively simple manner and take advantage of the unrivalled human material which I had at my disposal. The first thing I did was to show Bugala how, with the aid of repeated injections of pre-pituitary, I could make an ordinary baby grow up into a giant. This pleased him, and he introduced the idea of a sacred bodyguard, like the Janissaries, only all of really gigantic stature, quite overshadowing Frederick's Grenadiers. That was, of course, a mere matter of routine, and you have seen the result.

'I did, however, extend knowledge in several directions—at least I extended the knowledge that existed when I was captured, for'—and he sighed—'I dare say the confounded biologists at home have, by now, done all I have and more. I took advantage of the fact that their religion holds in reverence all really monstrous and imbecile forms of human beings. That is, of course, a common phenomenon in many countries, where half-wits are supposed to be in some way inspired, and dwarfs the object of superstitious awe. I went to work and was able to create various new types at will. By employing a particular extract of adrenal cortex on male babies, I was able to produce children who would have been a match for the Infant Hercules, and, indeed, looked rather like a cross between what one imagines him to have been like and a brewer's

drayman. By injecting the same extract into adolescent girls I was able to provide them with the most copious moustaches, after which they found ready employment as prophetesses.

' Turning my attention to the pineal, I was able to make children sexually mature at seven or eight—like the one you perhaps remember described in the "Knight of the Burning Pestle"—he presumably had a pineal tumour.

' These were voted a great novelty, and there was quite a craze for them at one time ; but I won't go into details.

' Tampering with the post-pituitary gave me the most remarkable cases of obesity. This Bugala took advantage of, together with the passion of the men for fatness as a mark of beauty in their women, and I believe made quite a fortune by selling as concubines female slaves whom he had got me to treat in this way. Finally, by another pituitary treatment, I at last mastered the secret of true dwarfism, in which perfect proportions are retained.

' Of these productions, the dwarfs are retained as acolytes in the temple ; a band of the obese young ladies form a sort of Society of Vestal Virgins, with various special religious duties, which, as the embodiment of the national ideal of beauty, they are supposed to discharge with peculiarly propitious effect ; and the giants, of course, as you have seen, form our Regular Army.

' This laboratory is not very exciting—it mainly houses workers who are engaged in manufacturing the extracts from the glands of the animals slaughtered in the State slaughterhouse, where, by law, all killing must now be done.

' The Obese Virgins have set me a problem which I confess I have not yet solved. Like all races who set great store by sexual enjoyment, these people have a correspondingly exaggerated reverence for virginity. It therefore occurred to me that if I could apply Jacques Loeb's great discovery of artificial parthenogenesis to man, or, to be precise, to these young ladies, I should be able to grow a race of vestals, self-reproducing yet ever virgin, to whom in concentrated and sublimated form should attach that reverence of which I have just spoken. You see, I must always remember that it is no good proposing to Bugala any line of work if I cannot show in what way it will benefit the national religion ; so I always have to discover problems which will satisfy both of the rather different interests of Bugala and myself. I suppose State-aided research would have much the same difficulty in a really democratic State. It would not be enough that the researcher was interested ;

he would have to show immediate applications. Well this, as I say, has so far beaten me. I have taken the matter a step further than Loeb and Bataillon with their fatherless frogs, and have induced parthenogenetic development by various chemical agencies in the eggs of reptiles and birds; but so far I have failed with mammals. However, I've not given up yet!

Then we passed to the next laboratory, which was full of tanks, jars, bottles, cages, and boxes, and in them the most incredible assortment of animal monstrosities that could be dreamt of. 'This laboratory is the most amusing,' said Hascombe. 'Its official title is the "Home of the Living Fetishes." Here again I have simply taken a prevalent trait of the populace, and used it as a peg on which to hang research. I told you that they always had a fancy for the grotesque in animals, and used the most bizarre forms extensively in religious sculptures, and also, in the shape of little clay models and ivory statuettes, for fetishes.'

'I thought I would see whether art could not improve upon nature, and set myself to recall my experimental embryology. You probably remember Driesch's very scholarly books on the subject. It often amuses me to think how he would have hated the way I built on his pioneer work—he afterwards went over into vitalism, you know, and became a professor of metaphysics, and would have disliked intensely any such materialistic evidences as this control I wield over the processes of life.'

'I use only the simplest methods. I utilise the plasticity of the earliest stages to give me double-headed and cyclopean monsters. That was, of course, done years ago in newts by Spemann, and in fish by Stockard; and I have merely applied the mass-production methods of Mr. Ford to their results. Then, when the plastic stage, after gastrulation, gives place to the chemical mosaic, I use excision and especially grafting. You've no idea what remarkable objects one can produce in this way. I remember being much impressed when a student with the achievement of some American or other who chopped moth chrysalids up and cemented the pieces together in various ways, a procedure which led to the hatching of all kinds of monsters. I took one of his results, in which he had made a tandem moth with four pairs of wings instead of two, and went on adding piece to piece until I got a sort of flying centipede—a centiale or centipinne, I suppose one should call it. That was much admired. But my specialities are three-headed snakes, and frog and toads with an extra heaven-pointing head. The former are

little difficult to make : you must first cause a *duplicitas anterior* in the earliest stages of development, and then graft the third head later. But there is a great demand for them, and they fetch a good price. The frogs are easier : I simply apply Harrison's methods to tadpoles half-way to hatching, and hardly ever have any difficulties.'

I asked him where the demand came from, and he explained that the old, dead fetishes had quite gone out of favour nowadays, and that only the products of this laboratory were supposed to have any real magical efficiency.

'I am just now engaged on the production of an amphibian fowl,' he continued, 'but you've no idea how unexpected difficulties have been cropping up. They almost all die at hatching. But I shall succeed. I picture them to myself when they are common—they will have such a pretty outline, and I think that one combining cock and hen would be interesting ; I wonder if it would be capable of self-fertilisation ?' And he fell for a few moments into a brown study.

Rousing himself, he showed me into the last of the four big buildings. Unlike the others, this contained no throng of diligent black workers, no evident signs, whether to eyes, ears, or nose, of biological research in progress, but was empty. It was a well-proportioned room draped with black hangings, and lit only from the top. In the centre were rows of ebony benches, and in front of them a glittering golden ball on a stand.

'This is where I am just beginning my work on reinforced telepathy,' he told me. 'Some day you must come and see what it's all about, for it really is interesting.'

You may imagine that I was pretty well flabbergasted by this catalogue of miracles pouring in upon my amateurish brain, which had mistaken the knowledge acquired in an elementary course of comparative anatomy (misnamed zoology in the University calendar) for an acquaintance with modern biology. Every day I managed to get a talk with Hascombe, and gradually the talks became recognised events of our daily routine, looked forward to certainly by me, and, I think, also by him. One day I asked him whether he had given up all hope of escaping and of a return to civilisation. He showed a queer hesitation in replying. Eventually he said, 'To tell you the truth, my dear Jones, I have really hardly thought of it these last few years. It seemed so impossible at first that I deliberately put the idea of it out of my head and turned with more and more energy, and I might almost say fury,

to my work. Now you bring it all up again, and upon my soul, if I am to be truthful, I am not quite sure whether I want to escape or not.'

'Not *want* to!' I exclaimed. 'Surely you can't mean that.'

'I am not so sure,' rejoined Hascombe. 'What I most want to do, I think, is to get ahead with this work of mine. Why, man, you don't realise what a chance I've got!—unlimited resources, unlimited time, unlimited labour and experimental subjects, and it is all growing so fast—I can see every kind of possibility looming ahead'—and he broke off into a silence.

However, although I was interested enough in his past achievements, I did not feel willing to sacrifice my future to his perverted intellectual ambitions, and to sit quiet merely in order to contemplate his further triumphs. I kept returning to the subject, leading up to it in various ways, and soon I could see that I had succeeded in inoculating him. One day I would point out that his success would die with him, and that not only would an unapplauded be an empty triumph, but that he had no *right* (for the devil can quote scripture for his purpose) to deprive the European world of the knowledge and power he had gained. At other times I tactfully pumped him about his past, and led him to talk about his boyhood, and his friends and family. I had hopes of some sentimental attachment, but he had apparently met with a disappointment in love, and was very stony about women. However, memories of English scenery, particularly the Dorset heaths, where he was bred, and the Westmorland lakes and mountains, where he returned again and again to walk and climb as a young man, did assuredly soften him.

One could almost see the conflict going on within. At times the passion for knowledge and for control of nature, hypertrophied by long indulgence, would reign undisputed, but at others he would be affected with a lassitude quite foreign to his ordinary nature, in which, as occasional sayings betrayed, his reviving desires for England and civilised companions and the background of European ideas were tugging against every impulse by which his African existence was ruled, till the two forces neutralised each other.

The experiments which most excited his imagination and his greed for achievement were those which he was conducting into mass telepathy. He had received his medical training at a time when abnormal psychology was still very unfashionable in England, but had luckily been thrown in contact with a young doctor who was a

keen student of hypnotism, and through him he had eventually been introduced to some of the great pioneers, like Bramwell and Wingfield, who were just beginning, in spite of opposition, to make the profession sit up and take notice of the phenomena they were producing. As a result, he had become a passable hypnotist himself, with a fair knowledge of the literature both of medical psychology and of so-called Psychical Research.

In the early days of his captivity he had soon become interested in the sacred dances which took place every month, on nights of full moon, and were regarded as important propitiations of the celestial powers in the same way that animal worship and sacrifice were for the propitiation of the jungle divinities. The dancers all belonged to a special sect, whose young men were assiduously trained in the performances. After a series of exciting and exhausting figures, symbolising various activities of the chase, of war, and of love, the leader, generally a man in the later prime of life, would lead his band to a ceremonial bench, shaped like the crescent moon, with ebony frame, and the seat itself of ivory, on which they sat, converging upon him as he stood in the centre. He then began to make passes at them ; and what impressed Hascombe was this, that so practised were they in their mutual relation that a few seconds sufficed for them to fall back in deep hypnosis against the ebony rail. It recalled, he said, the most startling cases of collective hypnosis recorded by a few of the French scientists. The leader then passed from one horn of the bench to the other, whispering a brief sentence into each ear, which the sleepers received without losing their complete immobility. He then, according to im-memorial rite, approached the Priest-King, and, after having exclaimed aloud, 'Lord of Majesty, command what thou wilt for thy dancers to perform in the service of the Moon Goddess and for propitiation,' the King would thereupon command some action which had previously been kept secret. He was supposed to think of it on the spur of the moment, but as a matter of fact he had actually decided on it beforehand with the aid of his Council, for the Royal Office being hereditary, and the Royal Family inbred and kept from active participation in any but ceremonial affairs, he was (if the truth must be told) not particularly intelligent. The command was often to fetch some object and deposit it at the moon-shrine ; or it might be to fight the enemies of the State ; or to run to the forest and fetch moonwort, the moon's sacred flower ; or (and this was what the company most liked) to be some animal,

or bird, or fish. Whatever the command, the hypnotised men would obey it, for the leader's whispered words had been an order to hear only what the King said, and to carry it out; and the strangest scenes would be witnessed as they walked or ran, completely oblivious of all who were in their path, in search of the gourds or sheep they had been called on to procure, or lunged in a symbolic and rigid way at an invisible enemy, or threw themselves on all fours and roared as lions, or galloped as zebras, or danced as cranes. The command executed, they stood like stocks or stones, unheeding of the outer world, until their leader, running from one to the other, touched each with a finger and shouted 'Wake.' They woke, and limp, but conscious of having been the vessels of the unknown spirit, danced back to their special hut or club-house.

This ready susceptibility to hypnotic suggestion struck Hascombe, and he obtained permission from Bugala to study and test the performers more closely. He soon established that the people were, as a race, extremely prone to dissociation, and could be made to lapse into what would ordinarily be called a state of deep hypnosis with very great ease, but a hypnosis in which the subconscious, though completely cut off from the waking self, comprised portions of the personality not retained in the hypnotic or somnambulistic selves of Europeans. Like most of those who have fluttered round the psychological candle, he had been intrigued with the notion of telepathy; and now, with this ready supply of hypnotic subjects under his hands, thought that he would begin some real investigation of the subject. By means of some simple physical phenomena such as the inducing of a blister by suggestion, and especially by post-hypnotic suggestion, which, curiously enough, was not known to the natives, he impressed Bugala with the possibilities of the work, and was allowed a free hand.

By dint of picking his subjects and paying special regard to physiological condition, he was soon able to demonstrate to his complete satisfaction the existence of telepathy, by making suggestions to one hypnotised man who transferred them without physical intermediation to another at the other end of the laboratory. Later, he had started to use mass-suggestion; by having two or three subjects at equal distances before him, he could transfer suggestions simultaneously to them all. But—and this was the present culmination and chief interest of his work—he found that when he thus simultaneously made a suggestion to several subjects at once the resultant telepathic effect was much stronger

than if he had done it to one at a time. The hypnotised minds could be made to reinforce each other.

One evening, just after the night had been drawn down like a blind across the face of the evening, and the glowing stars had come out in the velvety sky, above the multifarious buzzing and howling and rustling of the nocturnal African world, he began to expatiate upon the problem. 'I'm after the super-consciousness,' he said, 'the super-consciousness which shall have the same relation to our individual minds as our own consciousness has to the mental processes of our individual brain-cells. Have you ever reflected' —he leant forward and tapped my knee—'what an amazing fact is the unity of consciousness? Here are we, descended from cell-colonies, and they from still more remote separate single-celled ancestors: here is the cerebral cortex, the seat of our consciousness, composed of several hundred million separate cells, with the functional gaps between them still persisting as an essential part of the machinery in the form of synapses: and yet our consciousness is in all ordinary states and at all ordinary times a single, unitary thing. Presumably, if there is anything in the theory of evolution, the working of each one of those nerve cells is accompanied by something which one would call consciousness or at least the same kind of thing as consciousness, and yet we are not aware of the fact, so far below the threshold of our mental intensity do these dim pre-mental processes lie; our consciousness is clearly not merely the sum of all the millions of little consciousnesses, but a single something on a new level of complexity.

'I take it,' he went on, 'that what we call consciousness has been attained, in the course of evolution, by providing arrangements whereby thousands of brain cells are set vibrating (or whatever it may be) simultaneously, and in such a way that their activities all reinforce each other instead of being dissipated in random contradiction. The same thing, of course, happens in the electric organs of the famous torpedo fish, in which the feeble and, indeed, negligible electric discharges which accompany all muscular activity have been, in these transformed muscles, made to happen simultaneously and in a mutually reinforcing manner, so that the shock is of real value to the animal and highly unpleasant to its enemies or to you or me.'

'Now, I ask myself, if this mutual reinforcing of the sub-mental processes of nerve cells can be made to give rise to the relatively violent and unitary processes of our consciousness, why should not

a number of our individual consciousnesses be capable of being welded together in some simultaneity of action to generate a super-consciousness as unitary as ours, and infinitely richer in powers and intensity? What is more, I have not only got my theoretical views to back me: these reinforcements of telepathic effect when several minds are simultaneously excited seem to admit of no other explanation.'

I must confess that I got almost as interested and excited as Hascombe himself over the possibilities thus opened up, and spent a great deal of my time helping to plan or execute or discuss new experiments. It certainly seemed as if he were right in principle. If we could ensure that all the subjects were in practically the same state, psychological and physiological, extraordinary reinforcing effects were observed. At first, however, the attainment of this similarity of condition was very difficult, and our results were correspondingly erratic. Gradually, however, we discovered that it was possible to tune hypnotic subjects to the same pitch, if I may use the metaphor, and then the fun really began. The tuning up of the orchestra before the start was, especially at first, a long business, for we had to tune each one separately to the pitch of some man we had chosen as standard. Later, however, we were able to introduce many short cuts in our procedure, and began to get results.

First of all we found that, with increasing reinforcement, we could get telepathy from our 'orchestra' effectively conducted to a single hypnotised subject at greater and greater distances, until finally it was possible to transmit commands from the capital to the farthest part of the national boundary, a distance of nearly a hundred miles. It was really a very remarkable spectacle to see a man, who had been completely quiescent ever since he had been hypnotised some hours before, suddenly get up without any visible stimulus and begin carrying out some ridiculous action in response to the telepathic command which we knew was being issued fifty or eighty miles away.

We next found that it was not necessary for the subject to be in hypnosis for the telepathic command to be received. Almost everybody, but especially those of an equable temperament, who did not think too much, and especially did not think too much about themselves, could thus be influenced. Most extraordinary of all, however, were perhaps the effects which we first of all christened 'near effects,' since their transmission to a distance was not found possible until some time later. If, after Hascombe had suggested

some simple command to a large group of hypnotised subjects, he or I went right up to or among them, we would experience the most extraordinary sensation, as of some superhuman personality repeating the command over and over again in a menacing and overwhelming way ; and, whereas with one part of our personalities we would feel that we must carry out the command, with another we felt, if I may say so, as if we were only a part of the command, or rather part of something much bigger than ourselves which was commanding, and towards which we seemed to have no other duty than that of helping it in the task of issuing this command.

This, Hascombe claimed, was the first beginnings of the super-consciousness, and proceeded to test his assumption in various ways.

Bugala, of course, had to be considered. We sent him reports of progress as time went on, and he was present at many of our experiments. What we stressed for his benefit was not the possibility of establishing a personality of a new order, but the advantages to orthodox religion, and to himself in particular, which could be made to spring from telepathic transmission and its reinforcement. Hascombe, with the Tibetan prayer-wheel at the back of his mind, suggested that when the method was perfected they would be able to induce a partial hypnotic condition in the whole population at a given moment, and then transmit a prayer to them. This would ensure that the daily prayer, for instance, was really said by the whole population, and, what is more, simultaneously, which would undoubtedly enhance its efficacy to a considerable degree. It would make it possible in times of calamity or in preparation for battle to keep the whole praying force of the nation at work for long spells together ; furthermore, they would not feel the effort or strain and, indeed, would not in their conscious selves even remember, when the current was switched off, that they had been praying at all, although, of course, the influence would persist in their subconscious, and might through it influence their conscious life.

Bugala, to do him justice, was deeply interested, and brought to a consideration of the problem the acumen of the ambitious politician as well as the gravity of the statesman—although it must be admitted that love of country was not his only motive, but that he was largely driven by that consuming desire for personal power that will always bring a number of otherwise very unsuitable figures to the front rank of political life.

He saw himself, through the aid of this new mental machinery,

planting ideas at will in the brain-cases of his people : and, best of all, those ideas would never have to run the gauntlet of consciousness, with its army of inspectors and detectives and examiners, would never have to march up the front doorsteps and pass the scrutiny of the butler, but would slip in unobserved at the unguarded back entrance ; and, just because their presence was not suspected, would exert all the greater effect on the gentry inhabiting the front rooms of consciousness.

He saw himself willing an order ; and the whole population rousing itself out of trance to execute it. He dreamt dreams before which those of the proprietor of a newspaper syndicate, even those of a director of propaganda in war-time, would be pale and timid.

Naturally, he wished to receive personal instruction in the methods himself ; and, equally naturally, it was difficult to refuse him. We did our best to keep him from becoming too expert, or God knows what tricks he might not have been up to. But we had to allow him to be present at many of our trials, and to become proficient in the elements of inducing hypnosis and in particular the special type which was of service for telepathic communication.

I must say that I often felt a little uneasy about the possibilities that lurked in this new-won knowledge of his. I did not know how expert he might prove, nor what he might choose to do if one day he decided to override Hascombe's wishes and start experimenting on his own. But Hascombe only laughed when I talked to him. 'What can he do,' he said, 'even if he does take the bit between his teeth ? This is a small and limited country, and he has small and limited ideas. He can't plunge the world into war, nor will he want to do anything which will upset our own little home here. If his ideas rise above suggesting that every householder shall bring him a hen or a pig, and shall then forget all about it, call me a nigger.'

However, I confess that I was not happy about the whole matter ; and this, combined with my constant longing to get away from the place, led me to cast about again for means of escape. One day it occurred to me that this very method on which we were so busily employed, and about which I had such gloomy presentiments, might itself be made the key to unlock our prison.

I resolved to get Hascombe thoroughly worked up before I told him of my notion ; for I knew that if I broached it without any preparation, he would pooh-pooh it and it would be difficult for him ever to see it later in a favourable light. So I began harping again

on the extraordinary value of his work to humanity, and pointing out how all his knowledge would die with him if he did not manage to get back to Europe. He saw the force of this, for he knew that while all the rest of what he had done in Africa was nothing but the application of what had already been discovered, now he had hit on something at once new and fundamental.

At length one day, instead of my having to begin, he brought up the subject himself. ' You talk of getting back to England—but how are we to take the first step of escaping from this miserable negro Holy Land ? They would never let me go voluntarily ; and if we tried to escape they would be after us, and we should never have a chance. The very giants I have myself created would be our chief obstacle.'

This was my opportunity ; and I laid my cards on the table. ' My dear Hascombe,' I said, ' you underrate your powers. Haven't you thought of what you can do by means of telepathy and mass-suggestion ? What is there to prevent you saying to Bugala that your experiments are nearly crowned with success, but that for certain tests you must have a much greater number of subjects at your disposal ? You can then get a battery of a hundred or even two hundred men, and after you have tuned them, the reinforcement will be so great that you will have at your disposal a mental force big enough to affect the whole population without the least difficulty. Then—'

' Then,' said Hascombe—' yes ; now I begin to see what you are driving at— Then we can——' But I interrupted him.

' Please let me finish what I was going to say, Hascombe'—and I continued in as even and scientific a tone as I could command. ' Then, of course, one fine day we shall start an experiment, we shall raise the potential of our mind-battery to the highest possible level, and we shall send out through it a general hypnotic influence. The whole country, men, women, and children, will sink into stupor. I should not be surprised if some of the animals became hypnotised—however, that is neither here nor there, though doubtless of great scientific interest. We should then give our experimental squad the suggestion to broadcast " Sleep for a week." The telepathic message would be relayed to each of the thousands of minds waiting receptively for it, and would take root in them. Not only that, but some of the general population would be tuned to the same pitch as our subjects, and from them additional reinforcement would be obtained, so that it might very well be that the intensity of the

reinforced effect might bring still others up or down to the same pitch, in which case the whole nation would become a single super-consciousness, conscious only of the one thought, "sleep," which we had thrown into it to reverberate from mind to mind across the country.'

The reader will perhaps ask how we ourselves expected to escape from the clutches of the super-consciousness we had created. This, of course, I should have explained before, but I am not used to writing, and do not always remember to put things in in their right places. Well, we found in the first place that those who were conscious that the suggestions were being made, and especially those who themselves made the suggestions, were more or less immune to the effects produced, and could make themselves more so by conscious resistance. Even so, the reinforced collective consciousness was sometimes exceedingly strong, and did influence even the operators themselves. However, we discovered that metal was relatively impervious to the telepathic effect, and had prepared for ourselves a sort of tin pulpit, behind which we could stand while conducting experiments. This, combined with caps of metal foil, reduced the effects on ourselves to an infinitesimal amount. We did not inform Bugala of this property of metal, because we wished him to be as much in our power as possible.

Hascombe was silent. At length he spoke, and it was characteristic of him that he still put scientific interest in the foreground, and still kept his sense of humour. 'I like the idea,' he said. 'I like to think of inventing a new process and then demonstrating its efficiency by using it for the most crucial test possible; and I like to think that if I ever do reach England again and do get my scientific recognition, my discovery will have given me the means of escape.'

From that moment we worked assiduously to perfect the details of our method, and our plans for escape. I will not bother the reader with details. Suffice it then that, after about five months' more work, everything seemed propitious. We had provisions packed away, and compasses. I had been allowed to keep my rifle, on promise that I would never discharge it, and this, too, was ready. It was nearly the time of full moon, when we could travel by night as well as by day. We had made friends with some of the men who went on the trading expeditions to the coast, and had got from them all the information we could about the route, without arousing their suspicions.

At last the night arrived. We assembled our men as if for an ordinary practice, and, after hypnosis had been induced, started to tune them. At this moment Bugala came in, unannounced. This was what we had been afraid of ; but there had been no means of preventing it, as he naturally had a perfect right to come in and see what we, who were after all only his slaves, were doing. 'What shall we do ?' I whispered to Hascombe, in English. 'Go right ahead and be damned to it,' was his answer ; 'we can put him to sleep with the rest of them.'

We welcomed him in and gave him a seat as near as possible to the tightly packed ranks of the performers, on the ground that he would be better able to see what was going on.

At length the preparations were finished. Hascombe, his eyes shifting apprehensively to Bugala, went into the pulpit and said, 'Attention to the words which are to be suggested.' There was a slight stiffening of the bodies. 'Sleep !' said Hascombe. 'Sleep is the command : command to all men and all women in this land to sleep unbrokenly for twice seven days and nights.' Bugala leapt up with an exclamation of surprise ; but the induction had already begun. We with our metal coverings were partially immune. But Bugala was struck by the full force of the mental current. He sank back on to his chair, helpless. We busied ourselves with our preparation. From time to time we looked at Bugala. For a few minutes his extraordinary will partly resisted the suggestion. Although he could not move, his eyes were open and he was watching us with a look of impotent anger. But at length, as the reinforcement grew from the outlying districts, he succumbed, and his eyes closed.

We lost no time in making our escape. Although we were, of course, pretty heavily laden, we managed to make good progress. What is more, we knew that we had to make good progress. The effects of our command could not last for ever. With time the organism's purely physiological desires, hunger before all, would gradually gather strength. When they became stronger than our telepathic induction, the people would wake up. No more than a man can be forced by hypnotic suggestion to do anything of which he sincerely and wholeheartedly disapproves, could this command of ours, however strongly reinforced, permanently dominate over more primitive impulses. We reckoned, however, that the intensity we had induced was so great that the natural man would be hard put to it to wake up ! We felt pretty certain of a four

days' sleep, hoped for six, and would not have been too surprised at the fortnight we had asked for. But we could not risk taking more than three days in getting beyond the frontier.

That was a fantastic journey through the silent country ! The people were sitting about like the attendants at Madame Tussaud's —those mysterious figures of which one was never certain (unless one poked them or asked them a question—and then almost invariably found one's tentative opinion had been wrong !) whether they were of wax or of flesh. Women sat asleep by their milk-pails, the cow by this time far away. Fat-bellied naked children slept at their games. The houses, if one peeped in, were full of sleepers sleeping upright round their food, or fixed in some devotional act, recalling to me Wordsworth's famous 'party in a parlour.' Very odd, too, were bands of sleeping men caught while hunting.

Most interesting was the effect on animals. At first sight, most animals seemed not to have come under the influence at all ; but we were inclined to think that there had been really a little damping down of their general activity. On the other hand, one species was most definitely affected—the domestic dog. I suppose it was because the dog does have some kind of rapport, however primitive, with man—because he is really domesticated, a human appanage—that, with scarcely a single exception, every dog we saw was dozing or, at least, sitting very quiet, and none roused themselves to bark at our passage.

So we went on, feeling queerer and queerer as we passed even more of the living black statues, scarcely believing in this morphean state into which we had plunged a nation. At length the frontier was reached. There, with an extreme elation, we passed an immobile and gigantic frontier guard. I felt like a schoolboy, and put a three-headed snake, which I found in his holy basket, into my kit for a souvenir. I tied his hands behind his back and put his basket over his head—a childish practical joke of which I afterwards felt rather ashamed, as well as a stupidity which I later realised would help to give our route to possible pursuers.

A few miles farther we sat down, had a good solid meal and a doze, and took stock of our belongings. Our kit was rather heavy, and we decided to jettison (and carefully conceal) some superfluous weight, in the shape of some of our food, some of our specimens, and our metal headgear, or mind-protectors. Apparently the effect of the command was beginning to wear a little thin, for it

now, and at this distance, produced in us only the slightest drowsiness, which it was easy to conquer by conscious effort.

By nightfall on the third day we had left the eastern boundary of the country twenty or thirty miles behind us. After a rest and a meal we were again on our feet, swinging steadily down the gentle slope of a park-like country that spread for miles ahead, when Hascombe suddenly stopped and turned his head to look back.

'What's the matter?' I said. 'Have you seen a lion?' His reply was completely unexpected.

'No. I was just wondering whether really I ought not to go back again.'

'Go back again!' I cried. 'What in the name of God Almighty do you want to do that for, and *now*?'

'It suddenly struck me that I ought to,' he said, 'about five minutes ago. And really, when one comes to think of it, I don't suppose I shall ever get such a chance of research again. What's more, this is a dangerous journey to the coast, and I don't expect we shall get through alive.'

I was thoroughly upset and put out, and told him so—hadn't we thrashed all these things out before starting?—and was this the time to begin a discussion when we had taken our decisive step? However, nothing seemed to make any impression on him. He just stood there, repeating that he felt he must go back.

And then suddenly, for a few moments I felt I must go back too. It was like that old friend of our boyhood, the Voice of Conscience—a something that is part of ourselves and yet in antagonism with another part, insistently urging its point of view and making us feel extremely uncomfortable at this partial splitting of our mental organism.

'Yes, to be sure, we ought to go back,' I felt and thought with fervour. But then, suddenly checking myself as the thought came under the play of reason, '*Why* should we go back?' All sorts of reasons were proffered, as it were by unseen hands reaching up out of the hidden parts of me. We ought to go on with the great work; I ought not to desert Hascombe, who was set on return; we should probably be killed by lions or snakes or savages if we persisted on our journey; nobody would believe us if we got home . . . *e via correndo*. But, as luck would have it, my rational self happened to be fairly alert at the moment. For one thing, it did not seem to find the reasons altogether sufficient; and then it came to me, or to that part of me, that none of these

reasons had ever seemed to have any cogency before. Why should they now? and yet they did. 'I really *ought* to get back,' I still kept on feeling, in just the same sort of way in which I had felt I *ought* to go out on an errand for my mother when the errand happened to take me past the house where I might perhaps catch a glimpse of the object of my first calf-love.

And then I realised what had happened. Somebody had woken up—Bugala—yes, it must be Bugala, because he alone would know what was afoot; and he alone would be able to do what was now being done; and he had wiped out the suggestion we had given to the super-consciousness, and in its place put in another. I could see him thinking it out, the cunning devil (one must give him credit for brains!), and hear him, after making his passes, whisper in prescribed form his new suggestion: 'Will to return!'

'Return!—Return!' would have vibrated in the two hundred minds before him; from them the message flashed to all the entranced population, until the whole super-consciousness was now but one will to return instead of as before one desire of sleep. It spread its waves through the ether, but would have no influence on tribes around, who were not used to thinking the same thoughts, and were not tuned to the same resonance. But we, Hascombe and I, and Hascombe much more than I, were part of the community; and we were receiving in our subconscious selves this broadcast message.

'Return!' For most of the inhabitants the command would have no meaning, for they would have been caught at home by the hypnotic trance. Doubtless some young men out on the hills, or truant children, or girls run off in secret to meet their lovers, were even now returning, stiffly and in somnambulistic trance, to their homes. But it was only for them that the command of the super-consciousness had any meaning—and for us.

It had come into our subconscious, and thence insidiously affected our conscious emotions and will, and, they once affected, in stepped rationalisation, that process so easy to detect and laugh at in others, so difficult to detect and discount in ourselves, and provided us with dozens of good reasons for doing what we wanted, a hundred excuses constructed by servile logic to serve the needs of emotion, the master.

I am putting it in a long and tedious way, discursively; at the moment I simply *saw* what had happened and all its implications in a flash. I told Hascombe—I showed him it *must* be so—that nothing else would account for the sudden change; I begged and implored

him to use his reason as master and not as servant, to stick to his decision and to come on. How I regretted that, in our desire to discard all useless weight, we had not taken our metal telepathy-proof head-coverings !

But Hascombe would not, or could not, see my point. I suppose he was much more imbued with all the feelings and spirit of the country, and so more susceptible. Then, of course, he had never been so set on escape as I was ; and perhaps his constant practice in inducing hypnosis and mass-telepathy in his men had automatically tuned him to their pitch. However that may have been, he was immovable. He must go back ; he knew it ; he saw it clearly ; it was his sacred duty ; and much other similar rubbish.

All this time the suggestion was attacking me too, and I had to do my best to resist it. It was at times very strong ; and finally I felt that if I did not put more distance between me and that unisonic battery of will, I should succumb as well as he.

'Hascombe,' I said, 'I am going on. For God's sake, come along with me. This is the last chance.' And I took my rifle, shouldered my pack, and set off. He was shaken, I saw, and came a few steps after me. But finally he turned, and, after sitting irresolute a few moments, made off, in spite of my frequent pauses and shouts to him to follow, in the direction we had come.

I can assure you that it was with a gloomy soul that I continued my solitary way. I shall not bore you with my adventures, which would seem tame after the rest of my story, although at the time they loomed big enough and unpleasant enough to justify most of my forebodings. Suffice it to say that at last I got to a white outpost, weak with fatigue and poor food and fever, and after at one time being driven nearly crazy with fear at an encounter with driver ants.

I kept very quiet about my adventures, only giving out that our expedition had lost its way and that most of my men had run away or been killed by the local tribes. After a bad bout of blackwater, and much kindness at the hands of my hosts, I reached Mombasa, and so took ship to England. But I was a broken man. The fever had entered into my blood and liver and bones, and a profound gloom had invaded my mind at the thought of Hascombe and the way he had been caught in his own net.

I never knew what happened to him. Bugala was not simply the primitive barbarian who would have killed him in rage at his trick and his attempted escape. If it had suited his book, he would have

kept him to achieve new wonders for the glory of the black god and his dummy priest-king, and for the advancement and increase of power of their servant Bugala. But quite likely Hascombe was killed. As I say, I never have found out, and I do not suppose that I am likely to find out now.

You may ask why I did not talk about the place and try to organise a rescue expedition; or why I did not bring Hascombe's discoveries, or, at least, the discovery of mass-telepathy and reinforcement of mental intensity, before some scientific body like the Royal Society or the Metapsychical Institute. I can only repeat that I was a broken man. I did not expect to be believed; I was not at all sure that I could repeat our results, even on the same human material, much less with men of another race and another type of mental structure; and I dreaded ridicule.

However, I am an oldish man now, and, what is more, old for my years. The war which was to end war and the peace which seemed designed to end peace have both left profound impressions on my mind, and taught it a number of disagreeable facts, and it is largely because my African experiences seem to me to have a bearing on one of these facts that I have at last brought myself to write and publish my story, in the hopes that the startling clothes which the fact wears in its African setting may arrest people's attention and induce them to pay more attention to it as it slips past their nose almost unnoticed in the drab garments of familiarity.

You must forgive, gentle reader—I believe that it is the correct way to address you—my sermonical turn. I cannot help it: I am an old man, and old men like sermonising, and if I don't get my story off my chest in my own way I shall never get it off at all. The fact I mean, is, that it is the merest cant and twaddle to go on repeating as most of our press and people continue to do, that increase of scientific knowledge and power is in itself a good thing.

Increase of knowledge is a good thing to those who love knowledge for its own sake. That I grant: but, fortunately or unfortunately, they are not a large number of men. Increase of knowledge is mere caviare to the general. It means nothing whatever to Tom, Dick, or Harry—until it is turned into control and power.

And what I am maintaining (one would have thought an obvious thesis enough!) is that power is only good or bad according to the way in which it is applied.

Here is where I launch Dr. Hascombe on the British public. Hascombe attained to an unsurpassed degree of power in a num-

of the applications of biology. But to what end did all this power serve? Partly to gratify his own will to power—a perfectly good end, of course, provided he did not let it interfere with other people's lives and affairs. But apart from this, merely to perpetuate and enhance the importance of a barbaric and grotesque set of superstitions and beliefs, and to fasten the yoke of a false religion and its ambitious priest more firmly upon the shoulders of an unoffending and hard-working people. I know it is not the fashion nowadays to talk of religions as true or false. But I had an old-fashioned evangelical upbringing, and, in any case, if one cannot speak of true or false in this connection, I think all will admit that one may justly apply the terms truer or falser: and this religion was certainly less true than a good many others.

I don't suppose my moralising will have done any good, and I am aware that others have drawn the same moral before. But I do feel a relief at having written out my story for the great British Public, and I do commend to them the obvious moral, and ask them to think what they propose doing with the power which is gradually being accumulated for them by the labours of those who labour, not because they like power, but because they happen to want to find out the truth about the way things work.

ADAM'S PEAK.

WHEN I was a boy and boys' books were better than they are now, I remember reading one entitled 'The Secret of Adam's Peak.' The hero, a boy of course, after many adventures discovers the secret : where the wild elephants of the Island go to die, a valley high up in the recesses of the Peak, and—with the treasure of ivory thus obtained—saves from ruin hero number two, a young planter in financial difficulties. The plot gripped me then, and for the matter of that—a wandering life is the elixir of youth—grips me now : the idea of a hidden sanctuary where the weary mammoth can go, lay himself down, and pass away in peace. Nor is the idea altogether fantastic. Those who ought to know vouch for the fact that in the jungles where the elephant roams his corpse is rarely if ever found.

Then where *does* he go to die ?

'The Secret' was my first introduction to the Peak. My second was many years later when—hundreds of miles away from it in an outpost on the North-West Frontier—with books and maps I did some arm-chair travelling in preparation for a trip to Ceylon. My third, two months later, when we—my wife and I—actually ascended it.

The Peak is more than a mountain, it is a shrine, and one of those rare shrines sacred to more than one religion. On the rocky summit is a huge footprint. Hence the Sinhalese name for it of the Holy Footprint. For the Buddhists the footprint is that of the Lord Buddha, for the Mohammedans that of Father Adam, and for the Hindus that of Siva, and yearly thousands from all parts of the East—mostly Buddhists of the Island, though others too are represented—make their toilsome pilgrimage to it. Besides the footprint the Peak has another peculiar and famous phenomenon : its shadow which the rising sun—for a few minutes—throws far out across the landscape ; and also another name : Butterfly Rock. At a certain season of the year the butterflies, the beautiful variegated butterflies of Ceylon, flight across the Island, and where are they hurrying but to pay homage to our Lord Buddha at Adam's Peak ?

'The ascent of the Peak is the ambition of many tourists, but is practically impossible without the co-operation of friends living in Maskeliya' (near the foot of the Peak), says incorrectly one book

on Ceylon, otherwise excellent. We had friends in a fair number of places scattered up and down the East, but Maskeliya was not one of them. This, however, was hardly a deterrent—rather the reverse; every properly constituted traveller knows the incentive to do the ‘practically impossible.’ Accordingly we started inquiries, with the preliminary result that comparatively few Europeans appeared to make the ascent, the residents of the Island presumably because the Peak is too familiar, like the Tower of London to Cockneys, and the tourists—‘passengers’ as they are called locally—perhaps because too unfamiliar, a little off the beaten track. We should therefore, at any rate, have the satisfaction, in a mild way, of ‘doing the unusual thing,’ a feeling which lies at the bottom of most adventure, great or small. Secondly, we ascertained that Hatton was the place to make the climb from. But on the important point of the climb itself information was uncertain. The authority already referred to said that ‘the ascent was not dangerous, but extremely steep and trying.’ One informant advised me ‘to leave my wife at the bottom’ (easier said than done!—he was a bachelor); a second that he had had a fine view of the Peak for five years from his house, which was good enough for him; and a third—a lady—‘believed one had to be dragged up by chains,’ which sounded vague but ominous. Everyone agreed that the ascent must be made by night in order to catch the dawn from the summit. Altogether it was with a feeling of expectation, three-quarters pleasurable and one-quarter, say, the reverse (the mood of most travellers’ enterprises), that we drove down from Newara Eliya to Hatton. The exact proportions of our mood may possibly have changed from the moment when, on the way, my wife pointed to the landscape and said ‘There it is.’ There was only one ‘it’ for us just then, and no difficulty of identification—a peak that from a mass of tumbled forest-covered hills rose like a spire, sharp and sheer (unpleasantly sharp and sheer), into the sky. Even had it no footprint the Peak probably would have been, in some sort, an object of reverence to the simple Sinhalese, for, without being the highest mountain in the Island, it must be one of the most impressive in the world, so completely does it dominate the surrounding country-side.

Hatton is the centre of the great tea-growing industry, and it was strange to find at this small village, tucked away in the hills, a large railway station, an anachronism by the side of the Peak and its pilgrimage. But one experiences many such incongruities

in the East of these days and learns to suffer them—on the whole—gladly for the conveniences they afford, if still with some tinge of regret for the shuddering aside of the old by the new. At Hatton, too, our enterprise, pleasantly nebulous at a distance, took on a more concrete and ordinary form, a little too ordinary perhaps—not an unusual experience with enterprises seen near at hand. The few Europeans who did make the ascent stayed at the hotel, and the management would make all the necessary arrangements, which were simple enough. A car from the hotel to the foot of the Peak, two coolies to meet us there for carrying blankets and food, and a native guide for the way up ; the car to await our descent the next morning. ‘But what time should we start from the hotel ?’ ‘About 1.30 A.M. ; reach the foot at 2.30 ; climb up in two hours in plenty of time to see the dawn.’ (This from the management.) ‘Had the management been up ?’ The management smiled and said ‘No,’ but the guide was of opinion that two hours was ample. Like most people who have had much to do with native guides, I have a profound distrust of them. ‘There are only two sorts of guides : those who don’t know the way and say so, and those who don’t know the way and don’t say so.’ Whoever was the author of this dictum, I agree with him. In the present instance it was not so much a case of knowing the way as of judging the time, and at this your native guide is weak. His idea of time to begin with is rudimentary, and he is quite incapable of allowing for its ‘relativity,’ i.e. that which takes an hour for him (Arab of the desert, Pathan of the hills, whatever he is) may take considerably longer for those without his peculiar powers. Finally, after some discussion, we decided to double the guide’s estimate, and start at 11.30 from the hotel. If we arrived too early we could always have a doze at the top. On the other hand, it would be a pity, in common parlance, ‘to swallow a rat and be choked by the tail’: to struggle to the top of the Peak just too late for dawn and shadow. And in the event it was well we did so decide.

If there is an hour more depressing for starting a journey than just before daylight it is one after sundown. Dinner was over and we sat in the hotel lounge yawning over old magazines and waiting for 11.30 and the car to come round. Hatton is an early place, and the other guests had dropped off to bed one by one, followed—I don’t mind confessing—by our envious gaze. The ‘first fine careless rapture’ had worn thin, and we were only aware that before us lay a sleepless and strenuous night. There had been some rain in the afternoon, and I doubt if either of us would have

been over-disappointed by a fresh downpour putting a postponement to the ascent. But there was no downpour, and sharp at the hour we heard the chug of the car, and collecting our wraps bundled in with the guide and Nawab Khan. Nawab Khan was (is, in point of fact) my bearer, a grizzled, middle-aged Punjabi, not over-bright, but what ranks higher—honest, hard-working, faithful, and the proud possessor of the Mons Star (1914). His faithfulness even stood the test of his master marrying, an event which, with its prospect of more work and less perks, under the watchful eye of the Memsahib, often puts the bachelor's bearer to flight. Nawab Khan, however, had been tolerant enough to approve highly of this step, and in the course of events, and since he had a wish to acquire merit by making the ascent, now sped with us towards the foot of the Peak.

And speed we did to some purpose, our driver being of the tribe of Nimshi and driving furiously, though well, otherwise at that pace and over that road—abounding in hair-pin turns—our enterprise would have come to an abrupt end long before reaching the foot of the Peak. Honk, honk ! blared the klaxon, and we tore through the night. Beneath the glare of our head lamps the narrow ribbon of road unrolled itself swiftly. Now high banks, on which raced the silhouette of the car, shut us in, and now the great trees of the jungle, while here the road ran clear and we looked down on some dark valley, a single light shining in its depths. Gone was the depression of the hotel lounge as our spirits rose to the swift motion. Honk, honk ! went the klaxon ; and—with much shouting—a lumbering bullock-cart manœuvred to the roadside to let us pass. Once or twice we crossed a bridge with the swish of a stream in our ears, or slowed down to pass through a sleeping village. At length from the main road there debouched a side-track along which the car bumped for some miles, and then stopped. I looked at my watch : it was 12.40. Wheels could go no farther ; from here on it was a case of footing it. We got out, peered round, and following the outstretched arm of our guide saw a certain familiar outline blotted against the sky. It was the Peak. Our coolies emerged from an *ambalam* (pilgrims' shelter) near by, and tied up our belongings into bundles. The guide lit a hand lamp, and Nawab Khan fussed round superintending operations. For a few minutes we formed a little animated group passing in and out of the carlights, and then single-filed off into the darkness. The ascent had begun.

The path at first bore downwards over the open hillside, an easy start, though every yard down now meant a yard up later on. But

for the moment how pleasant it was walking along through the soft tropic night! A full moon is better for the ascent, but we had been unable to arrange our movements accordingly, and the sky—still overcast from the afternoon's rain—hung like some great pall overhead, only a few stars showing like pin-points of light through a dark curtain. As we descended, the Peak bulked itself ever higher and higher above us, and the sound of running water came faintly upwards. This sound grew stronger until—the bottom of the valley reached—it swelled to the rush of a mountain torrent spanned by a narrow rope-suspension bridge. Crossing this, which swung unpleasantly to the combined movement of our little party (for all we could see, the drop below might have been ten feet or a hundred), the path struck up through forest at increasing steepness. Time passed, and as with each stride we left the world farther below us it seemed not wholly so in the sense of space. Our drive from Hatton—Hatton with its hotel and railway station—the Island itself, the whole consciousness of an outside everyday life beyond, slowly receded, and became impalpable, unreal. Here only in this narrow jungle path, lit faintly by flickering gleams from the swaying lamp of the guide, and enveloped by an obscure immensity, was reality. All else was non-existent. Year after year, decade after decade, century after century, the way had been worn by the feet of countless thousands of ancient pilgrims, and perhaps some of their spirit hanging over the place had power to touch even an alien traveller from the West. For, during a fleeting period, held by illusion, he too was a pilgrim and trod a *via sacra* leading not only to a summit but also to a shrine. . . .

After crossing another bridge we reached the steps. How much of the route they actually covered I do not know: certainly less than half. But they marked definitely the beginning of the second and by far the most fatiguing part of it. At this point the ascent, steep before, went up at such an angle that steps had perforce been cut up and round the rocky hillside. They were not continuous: short stretches—how inadequately short they seemed to us!—of path intervened, joining flight to flight; but each was of a height that made its surmounting a distinct minor effort, especially for the lady of the party, who happened to be—not over-tall. You have climbed the steep winding staircase of some tall tower in an old ruin perhaps, and been glad enough to reach the top. Magnify that tall tower into a peak, multiply its steps a hundredfold, and you will realise the nature of our ascent. We had already too been walking up a precipitous rough track for more than an hour; it was

the dead of night—about 2 A.M.—and so far no sleep. By daylight we could at all events have seen some encouraging indication of progress made, however slow. No such indication was visible now, only step following step, flight following flight, in seemingly endless succession ever upwards through the gloom. Added to sleeplessness and fatigue, we were also going against time, that most wearing feature of night-marching, and had imagined the steps heralded the beginning of the end—the nearness of the summit. The guide shattered this hope : 'Top, far,' he informed us in broken English. As to how far it actually was, guide-like, he was depressingly vague. Fortunately we had doubled his estimate for the ascent, but at this rate of progress, and with 'top far,' it was impossible to say in how many hours we should win to the summit. Indeed, at one period I half despaired of ever doing so—that is to say, till after dawn, when our toil would have been lost. Step after step, flight after flight, we struggled up as in a nightmare when your limbs seem weighted with lead, and for all your effort you make no headway. After a while—and a long while it seemed—a light appeared overhead, and with much zigzagging of flights and steps, at length we reached it to find an *ambalam*. Some pilgrims, the first we had seen, were seated in it, and we thankfully did likewise outside. The *ambalam* was a superior one, stocked—incongruously enough—with soda-water and cigarettes, which we purchased for our following, refreshing ourselves from our thermos. What a relief it was to have reached a definite spot after that dark and tortuous maze below, and to rest at ease even for a few minutes ! Then once more those endless steps, but now with some marks by which we could measure our progress. At long intervals primitive lamps had been placed near the worst turns of the path, and if their feeble glimmer was of little practical assistance, at least they served as fixed points to aim for, to reach, and to pass. Lamp after lamp we put laboriously behind us, and then—as we stood to take breath at the end of a flight more than usually trying—the tolling of a bell came gently down from the darkness overhead. A startling sound enough in such a place, and then we remembered—only from the shrine on the summit could it come. Instinctively we looked up. The actual summit we could not distinguish, but high across the dark mass of the Peak—here overhanging us—a light moved slowly upwards, and with the tolling mingled the faint music of voices singing—a party of pilgrims chanting as they reached their goal. For us, too, it could not be so distant now, and we went forward somewhat encouraged. We had need of encouragement, since soon

even the flights ceased, to be followed by a scramble up the hillside, but this—trying as it was, especially by night—was perhaps on the whole preferable to the treadmill monotony of the steps. Here—fixed in the rock for the assistance of pilgrims—were the chains already alluded to, which we used in places not for *being* dragged up—as suggested—but for dragging *ourselves* up. That wide traveller, Ibn Batuta, mentions them six hundred years ago, and they are of greater antiquity still—perhaps as old as the pilgrimage itself. With every yard now the tolling and the chanting grew louder, but also ensued that tantalising period—common to the last stages of all journeys—when every yard seemed like three. Each bluff that loomed above us was the summit, until rounded, when another took its place. But at length, rising slowly foot by foot, we saw, not another bluff, but a small flat space with figures, lights, one or two low buildings. This was the summit at last, at long last, and the ascent over.

Physical fatigue is certainly not the least painful of life's experiences, but it is perhaps the one most quickly forgotten, and the hardest to express in words. We took three hours exactly to make the ascent, reaching the summit at 3.45. Three hours is not a long period in itself, but the fatigue of an effort is recorded not only by time. In ascending the Peak, the effects of having to climb by night and when short of sleep, must be considered, and above all of the steps. Without them, even with the distance appreciably longer, the ascent would be decidedly easier; with them it is certainly no exaggeration to call it 'extremely steep and trying.' Having no pretensions to being a mountaineer, I can, nevertheless, do an ordinary day's walking with most people. But for some days after the ascent my legs were stiffer, with a catch across the calf muscle than they had been for a good many years. For my wife, of course the ascent was more trying than for me, and in fact, if I had known beforehand how arduous it actually was, I would have taken the advice of the bachelor informant and left—or tried to leave—he at Hatton. However, all's well—here we are at the summit; and what an exquisite moment it was when we realised our climb was at an end!

Not without reason had the mountain appeared like a spire from below, for its actual top was only some one hundred and fifty feet square. The same primitive lamps were placed here and there and we could see a small shrine—evidently covering the Footprint—and a *pansala*, dwelling-place for the priests who—except when driven down by the South-West Monsoon—live on the Peak.

Surely one of the strangest habitations in the world, this small platform raised so high above the ordinary haunts of men. At the moment it was crowded by pilgrims, some waving torches, some praying outside the shrine ; others swarming up its steps with ecstatic cries to behold the Footprint, and leave beside it their simple offerings of flowers, candles, or perhaps a few hardly saved coppers ; others again gathered in circles around a priest, filling up the pauses of his reading or exhortation with loud responses. At intervals a pilgrim, having fulfilled all rites, approached the bell, tolled upon it, and the sweet, melancholy note floated off into the night, announcing the number of the ringer's pilgrimages—a toll for every ascent—and giving fresh heart to his fellow-pilgrims, still ascending wearily far below. An abrupt contrast this crowded, lighted, vociferous stage, after our dark and lonely climb, and an equally abrupt contrast was it to cross the platform, turn one's back on it, and look across the surrounding abyss. The sky was clear now with a blaze of stars, and we were above the lower clouds, which stretched away in a dim white expanse into the darkness. Under our feet, clinging to the face of the Peak, a moving light gleamed, disappeared, and gleamed again ; belonging, it might be, to the party—now in motion—that we had left at the *ambalam* ; and crossing to the opposite side we could see a similar light, indicating the alternative pilgrim route from Ratnapura.

My watch now showed 4.15 : time for a little badly needed sleep. We had our rugs put a few feet below and in the lee of the platform, wrapped ourselves up in them, and—with instructions to be awakened before dawn—dozed off.

It was still dark when we awoke, but with the promise of dawn vaguely in the air. The hour—the coldest of the twenty-four—outside the tropics would have been bitter : here it was uncomfortably chilling. A pale grey showed along the eastern sky, quickened to white and expanded, and as if from some gigantic lighthouse we saw revealed below us the sea of clouds, misty league upon misty league, with one by one the hilltops slowly emerging like huge rocks above a falling tide. On the platform the lamps were extinguished, and the pilgrims huddled together in silent shivering groups. A pause, and then the white changed to crimson, and the sun rose like a ball of fire. It was the moment of the shadow, and we looked westwards. Gradually a nebulous something—hardly more than a smudge—materialised on the horizon, hardened in outline, advanced, hovered for some minutes in the middle distance in a conical shape resembling the Peak, receded again, and

finally disappeared. Certainly a curious phenomenon ; nevertheless nothing more, and equally certainly no adequate compensation for the toils of the ascent. But rewards, amply sufficient too, lay elsewhere : in the climb through the dark hours of the night—for all its arduousness ; in participation in this ancient pilgrimage, and in the capture—however intermittent, faint and fugitive—of some of the spirit which inspired it ; in the vast panorama surrounding us, ever changing with the changing light, and now no longer a mist-covered sea, but a desolate stretch of the Polar regions with ice-floes, bays, capes, and headlands.

The increasing light emphasised what we had noticed already, that the pilgrims were by no means all men : women and children, even old women and infants, were amongst them. I have tried to give some idea of the nature of the ascent, stiff for able-bodied people like ourselves. What toil it must have meant to the weaker vessels, and how they could have accomplished it, I cannot say. Doubtless they made it in shorter stages, two, or perhaps three to our one ; even so it appeared to us little short of amazing. What we were to find not short of, but actually amazing, was the fact that similar weaklings came by the Ratnapura route, *severer still* than the Hatton one. The clouds, now thinning, were torn by the sun in great rents through which patches of the world below—hill and valley—came to view. Across one such patch we could trace for some little distance—now over rock, now through jungle—the steeply twisting Ratnapura path, up which a long file of minute figures slowly wound its way. Presently the sound of chanting rose softly on the fresh morning air, and from their fellow-pilgrims around us went back its answering echo. Gradually the chanting became louder, the figures larger and more distinct, the men distinguishable from the women. Soon we could make out the hale from the weak : the old men and women and young children, and as one watched their progress—painfully slow for all that they struggled bravely and were helped by their stronger companions—one did not wonder that at times some died by the way. Now the climbers were ascending the last few feet of the actual summit, and now—their measured intoning changed to cries of exultation—were pouring over on to the platform. Here the weaker folk were content to collapse, while the stronger pressed forward up the steps of the shrine itself.

It was a moving sight, this little band of pilgrims, enduring and overcoming hardships in the strength of their spirit. . . . Ignorant and superstitious peasants of the backward East ? Perhaps—yet each one possessing the great gift of fervent unquestioning faith—

and what after all is superstition and what is faith?—which the West has so largely lost. Not for the progressive Western traveller, for instance, the pilgrim's rapturous triumph when the shrine is reached; that door is shut to him, and, with no tool in the whole armoury of his civilisation to open it, he can but stand outside and envy.

Yet for all their fervour the pilgrims were not fanatical; the great majority of them Buddhists, they put no bar to others visiting their shrine. Nawab Khan told us with some excitement that in the crowd he had just found two fellow-Mohammedans; there were probably some Hindus—Buddhism in Ceylon shows strong traces of Hindu influence; and there were ourselves. This mutual tolerance seemed only fitting to the place. Down in the world below the contending creeds might argue, propagand, and preach; perhaps in the scheme of things their differences—since human nature is itself multifarious—fulfilled some dim purpose, but here so far above it the barriers of belief and race—if only for a fleeting period—were down, and in their place came something of the consciousness—and how rare is that *real* consciousness, apart from its lip-service—of the community of man to man. ‘Heresy to the heretic, orthodoxy to the orthodox, but the dust of the rose-petal belongs to the heart of the perfume seller.’

Few places of pilgrimage have the atmosphere of Adam’s Peak. Important shrines are usually imbedded in the heart of crowded towns where—however devout the pilgrims—the voice of the world tends to drown that of prayer, and where—besides the usual proportion of ‘original sin’ existing in all large towns—is added that mixture of hypocrisy, imposture, and intrigue, which too often is the peculiar flavour of a sacred city. Rome, when the capital of the Christian world, was—at times—one of the worst cities in Christendom, and to-day, Benares, Meshed, and Mecca, for instance, contain abuses which the more earnest Hindus and Mohammedans would be glad to see suppressed. Of the holy places I have visited there is only one which resembles the Peak—the Gangabal Lake in Kashmir, which, like the Footprint, is raised amongst the clouds of a mountain top.

A bustle on the platform and a party—perhaps the same which has just come up, since the pilgrims seemed to stay but a short time on the summit—prepared to descend the Ratnapura route. Again singing as they went, they filed slowly down, until gradually they were lost to sight, and the sound of their chanting—growing fainter and fainter—died away.

We too had to be descending, but before doing so took an opportunity of examining the Footprint. It is the rough outline of an enormous foot on the natural rock, measuring—I quote an authority, we did not estimate it ourselves—five and a half feet long, two and three-quarters feet broad, and from three to five inches deep. A crude object indeed for a pilgrimage, and yet we did not feel inclined to indulge in the superior smile reserved for such curiosities by the enlightened tourist, for it was also a symbol, an inspiration for not a little human effort and emotion. . . .

We made the descent in something of a reaction—the inevitable reaction which comes after the conclusion of an enterprise, when the sparkle has somewhat gone out of it and the flavour is a little flat. It was interesting, however, to correct by daylight our impressions of the route—not that they needed much correction. Contrary to expectation, since darkness exaggerates difficulties, the way was actually as stiff as it had seemed the night before, and we had no reason to be dissatisfied with our time for the ascent. We reached roadhead in about an hour and a half, found the car there, and drove back—nodding, and only half awake—to Hatton, to a late and large breakfast, to hot baths, and to the luxuriousness of a long and well-earned sleep.

It is possible that you who read this will one day find yourself in Ceylon, and may wish to climb the Peak; and of all the experiences that Ceylon offers it is the most interesting. If a mountaineer you will properly despise any hints as to making the ascent less arduously, but if not the following advice may be profitable. Instead of leaving Hatton—as we did—at 11.30 P.M., do so at 5 P.M., which brings you to roadhead at 6. Climb till 8, and at the *ambalam* have dinner—brought with you—and a comfortable smoke. Start again at 9, and taking it easy reach the summit at 10.30 or 11, when you can sleep till dawn. In case you wish to lengthen your trip, then have your baggage sent ahead from Hatton, and, instead of returning there, descend to Ratnapura. Finally, should you actually make the ascent and find the above suggestions of some little use, you will more than repay any small debt of gratitude you owe the writer by dropping him a jotting from your notebook—especially as to the Ratnapura route. Some day, says my wife—ah! those wonderful 'some days' of travel—we will return to the Island, and foot it once more towards the Peak, but from the Ratnapura side. Meantime we must rest content to do our travelling on that route at second-hand.

IBN SABIL.

**THE MYSTERIOUS CRY OF THE DEATH'S-HEAD
HAWK MOTH—WHAT HUDSON THOUGHT.**

THE Death's-Head Hawk Moth—the *Acherontia atropos* of the text-books—is the largest, perhaps the handsomest, and certainly the most interesting of all British moths, for about it has gathered an atmosphere of superstition, of terror, and of mystery that makes it 'a thing apart' from all the other species of our moths and butterflies.

This striking-looking insect, which is one of the latest of the night-flyers, and so strong upon the wing that it has not infrequently flown aboard ships several miles out at sea, was known to naturalists in the seventeenth century, for Mouffet figured it in 1634; but it received no distinctive English name till 1773, when Wilkes called it 'The Jasmine Hawk Moth,' doubtless because the caterpillar fed on the leaves, while the moth was attracted to the flowers of the White Jasmine. Two years later that famous naturalist, Moses Harris, christened it 'The Bee Tyger Moth'; the first part of its title was bestowed because of its passion for honey, the second in description of the black and tawny yellow stripes that adorn its unusually thick, but quite shapely, body. Three years later Harris again changed its name to 'The Death's Head,' by which it has since been and still is commonly known, though in certain parts of the country the village folk call it the 'bee robber,' because whenever possible the moth makes its way into hives—not a difficult task with the old-fashioned straw skeps—gorges itself, and does great damage, while the legitimate inmates are for some reason, perhaps the sound, perhaps the scent of the intruder, hypnotised, even as they are hypnotised by their legitimate sovereign the Queen Bee. No one who has seen a specimen of the moth can be surprised that the name 'Death's Head' has remained in use, for Nature has drawn upon the back of the thorax a rough but unmistakable copy of that piratical emblem the skull and crossbones. It is this grisly emblem, and the mysterious cry made by the insect ('the only Lepidopterous insect gifted with a voice,' says Kirby), which have made it an object of superstition and terror to the ignorant. In a paper on 'The British

Night-Flyers,' published nearly a century ago, the writer declares that the Death's-Head Hawk Moth

'has long formed an object of dread to the superstitious, and in certain districts its entrance at open window or door has been considered a certain omen of death. Linnæus, following his system of picturesque nomenclature, gave to it the name of *Atropos*, that one of the Fates whose office it was to cut the thread of human life, and he placed it in the genus "Sphinx." More modern entomologists in making this insect form the type of a new genus have preserved the idea of Linnæus by giving to this new genus the name of *Acherontia*, pertaining to that stream which in the Greek mythology had to be passed before entering the infernal regions. A low wailing sound which this insect emits has greatly added to the terror its appearance inspires among the ignorant.'

In this connection Latreille, a well-known French naturalist, who died in 1833, tells us that in Brittany in the second quarter of the nineteenth century a great number of Death's-Head Moths appeared just before the outbreak of a terrible epidemic, which was attributed to the ominous visit of these dreaded insects. The 'low wailing sound' alluded to by the author of 'The British Night-Flyers' is hardly a correct description of the strange noise made by the Death's Head, which is distinctly more in the nature of a squeak than a wail. It is this noise which has provided the mystery that still exists with regard to the manner in which it is produced. The question has been argued times without number during the last hundred years. In the earlier part of last century several distinguished French entomologists advanced their theories, and a committee of French experts was appointed to inquire into the question. But, though they disproved several of the theories, they unfortunately arrived at no definite conclusion. Nor does such an actually definite conclusion appear to have been reached during the years of the present century. While I was living in Hampshire (1918-23) I spent a good deal of time in observing butterflies and moths in the secluded enclosures of the New Forest, and in other retired spots in this county that is so rich in specimens of insect and bird life, which are of such interest to lovers of nature. Naturally a book often referred to by me was W. H. Hudson's 'Hampshire Days,' and here I read for the first time his remarks on the Death's-Head Hawk Moth. In Chapter VI. of 'Hampshire Days' he writes :

'What an experience it would be to look on the death's-head moth in a state of nature, feeding among the flowers in the early evening, with some sunshine to show the delicate grey-blue markings of the upper- and the indescribable yellow of the under-wings—is there in all nature so soft and lovely a hue? Even to see it alive in the only way we are able to do, confined in a box in which we have hatched it from a chrysalis dug up in the potato patch and bought for sixpence from a workman, to look on it so and then at its portrait—for artists and illustrators have been trying to do it these hundred years—is almost enough to make one hate their art. My ambition has been to find this moth free, in order to discover, if possible, whether or no it ever makes its mysterious squeaking sound when at liberty. But I have not yet found it, and Lepidopterists I have talked to on this subject, some who have spent their lives in districts where the insect is not uncommon, have assured me that they have never seen, and never expect to see, a death's-head which has not been artificially reared.'

Well, I had been luckier than Hudson's Lepidopterists. True, my Death's Head was not 'feeding among the flowers in the early evening,' but none the less he was a wild thing full of lusty life. It was at Teignmouth, S. Devon, when I was a small boy, that the great moth came flying one morning (perhaps from a ship at sea, more probably from the fields and woods of Shaldon) across the estuary of the Teign, and that wide expanse of grass, the Den, that fronts the town, right into the old Market Place, and there selected a fishmonger's shop in which to make a temporary settlement. So it was on a marble slab, under an inverted glass bowl, that I first beheld him. We children, all interested in nature subjects, were at dinner when word came by a boy speaking in broad Devon, that Miss Gilpin (the fishmonger) had secured for us 'a girt butterfly.' Off went I with a collecting box, and was told by the lady, who seemed somewhat alarmed at her strange capture, that 'when er flew in I just took er in my apern, and er scritched like a chil' (screeched like a child). Well, at any rate I got the captive home quite undamaged. Hudson's remarks induced me to write him an account of this childish episode, and my epistle received a prompt, courteous and interesting reply which I give in full.

'23 NORTH PARADE,
PENZANCE, January 5, 1919.

'DEAR SIR.—I am obliged by letter: I am laid up with illness and so write under difficulties. As to the Death's Head, according to your account, the one you speak of *did not* utter its sound when

in a state of freedom, but when the girl had caught and put it in her apron. Well, as I say in "H. D." they always squeak when captured. What I want to know is: Does the sound they emit have any function, any use in their life, as is the case of all the singing and stridulating insects of different orders? I am inclined to think that the squeaking is nothing but an expulsion of air through the breathing places, and is caused by fear and excitement, just as the hissing is in snakes. There is no organ of sound in the Death's Head, but to produce the sound there must be *friction* somewhere, and my idea is that the bars, or whatever one may call them, which lie over the breathing orifices like a grid must rub together when the moth is agitated.

"Yours very truly,
W. H. HUDSON."

With regard to my Devonshire capture, as I have already said, I got him safely home, and my father, a doctor, destroyed him without pain but with great care, and when set he became the glory of my childhood's collection. I see him as I write, the striking central figure of an old show-case, and though successive summers have sadly dimmed those lovely hues that made him a glowing glorious creature nearly seventy years ago, he invariably attracts admiration from those who see him for the first time.

W. COURTHOPE FORMAN.

A BLESSINGTONIAN IDYLL.

A QUARTO volume bound in crimson watered silk, heavily stamped with an implicated gold design of oval form, in the midst of which one deciphers the title, also in letters of gold, ‘The Belle of a Season.’

This is a dear, dead, and forgotten thing which had great place in its day in boudoirs and upon drawing-room tables when it was the latest thing from the witty, satirical, and moral pen of the Countess of Blessington.

That lady who looks eagerly out upon us from Lawrence’s canvas was much too bright, vivid, and intelligent to be more than superficially guilty of this desperately poor stuff. The pose of her time demanded certain sentiments and approved only a certain form of expression, and as a reflection of the early days of the Victorian era this poor old book is almost a work of genius. Man, and particularly woman, is not constituted by Nature to be so elaborately imbecile in pose and expression, but the most foolish and complex sort of procedure and the most involved and pernicious sort of pretence can and do form fabric of convention in which the brilliant become the greatest experts. Therefore it is not the gay and beautiful Countess we must blame for this admirable historical document, but her world—the British Ideal, as it used to be when, as yet, we had not lost our primitive virtues and vices; when the dreadful Byronic dogs were a real terror and anxiety to all sound and respectable folks (he a nobleman, too); when moustachios were a new and dashing adornment and the ringlet and the wreath symbols of all the tepid virtues and futile accomplishments. Incredible! Fascinating! Days of sensibility and inflexible propriety!

These two thousand lines of rather halting verse interspersed with touching ballads and illustrated in the very height of line and stipple, soft and exquisitely finished, concern the début of a fresh young bud at the early age of sixteen. She is, of course, the Belle of the Season, and one cannot help thinking that the courtly Mr. Chalon, R.A., who provides the pictures, has allowed a certain likeness to the noble authoress to creep into his superlatively dainty drawings. Lady Mary—for so is the heroine named—appears first

of all at a balconied window, feeding her captive songster with sugar and (possibly) groundsel. Her raven ringlets flow free, and both in face and figure she is quite the woman. The rose and jasmine compete for her favours, although the architecture is not of the crumbled order ; one notes the harp of her sacred shrine, and that discreet and charming novelty—destined to play so large a part in the history of mankind—the venetian blind. Lady Mary, as has already been said, is sixteen, and her ‘Sire’ suggests to his ‘Lady’ that it is time she had a season. The Lady, stirred by the awful thought that a daughter old enough to come out seems to make Mamma old enough to go in, at first mildly resists the idea, whereupon Papa, who confesses to a purse thinned by the last election (the free and independent voter knew his value in those good old days), appears to relinquish the scheme, but Mamma, with a sudden *volte face*, assents.

‘Yes, pain can seize a mother’s heart
 When, ere her mellowed charms depart,
 She must, a full-blown rose, retire
 While eager crowds the bud admire.’

Then follows some sage advice upon the advisability of postponing marriage until the age of twenty-four to enable one to put off the day of chaperonage. After this there is an apostrophe to Fashion, described under the figure of an elephant, and her ladyship bewails the foolishness of devoting the vernal months to town, the summer to the barren sea, and the muddy autumn and winter to the country—but needs must when the elephant dictates.

‘The journey o’er, in Grosvenor Square
 Behold arrived our timid fair.’

Then come the *Marchandes des modes and couturières*. Evidently shopping was done in royal fashion in those days.

Next follows the presentation at Court. Alas ! that the picture which once decked this event has been ravished by some desecrating hand. Still the ‘word painting’ remains. There were trains from ‘Genoa looms’ to accompany and rhyme with ‘plumes,’ and ‘rich transparent folds of lace fall from her head with airy grace.’ Quite in the best manner. Now she bends before the young Queen,

‘All youth, all hope, all loveliness,
 Whom millions only name to bless,’

and again

' So dignified, so lofty, mild,
There meet the angel, woman, child.'

Quite a charming apostrophe to Victoria, but although 1840 was the year of Queen Victoria's marriage there is no allusion to the handsome Consort. And now, 'the presentation o'er Which opens Fashion's fairy door,' she begins to go it a bit, but Mamma keeps her eye on her pretty closely.

' Her mother proud, with practised eye,
Dissects the crowds that hover nigh.
No younger brother dare draw near
To whisper in her treasure's ear.'

They used to know their places, these detriments, it seems. Now Lady Blessington lets us into the know, or, as she phrases it, 'gently casts aside The veil that Mary's heart doth hide.' It is as you suspect, gentle reader: there is 'one youth whose glance hath met her own.' She longs to know and yet 'for worlds she could not ask his name; The thought's enough to tint with shame Her fair young cheek,' etc. There, girls! are you like that? Have you any delicacy of feeling? I'm ashamed of you.

' The experienced mother marks the gaze
With which the youth her child surveys,'

and, although she does not know him from Adam, she has an eye for blood and sees at a glance that ' by form and air He ranks among the noblest there.' But he disappears, and a cloud broods over the mother and daughter. But what's this?

' He's here again,
Leading the Duchess Deloraine'—

an old friend of the family. Now we learn that Mamma is Lady Percy. Lord Percy does not attend these junketings. It is his part to foot the bills and save up all he can for an appeal to the country. Well, the Duchess presents the beauteous stranger, her son, Lord Deloraine, who has just returned from the East. It appears he has been wise enough to come away from Smyrna, afflicted by plague, after losing a dozen friends by the disease. He evidently knew enough to come in out of the rain, and now he means to settle down it seems. The young people take to each other like steam.

' Did ever traveller talk so sprightly?
Smiled ever Beauty's eyes so brightly?'

Mamma played her part with 'abundant tact': tact positively stuck out of Lady Percy, and she was artful enough to know that young men take stock of a mother, as a sort of prophecy of what the daughter is likely to be in a few years. So Mamma did all her tricks of wit and taste, and generally made the running until half-past four comes; then the poor patient devil is allowed to go. 'We'll tell not Mary's dreams that night,' but she was fairly gone with all the delicate flutterings of her romantic age. The next day she has a nasty jar, for while hoping to meet him in the park, where she drives at five o'clock, he calls and leaves his card at her house. But there is still to-night.

'Now at her mirror stands our Mary
Like Cinderella dressed by fairy.'

There is a picture of this ravishing vision. The mirror alone is worth the money. It is draped and bowed and surmounted by a stuffed dove with wings outspread. Mary has those exquisite shoulders which were then worn—plump, and sloping; and her corsage, which goes straight across in the delightful manner of the mode, has a rose in front and a bow at the back. She wears a necklace of pearls as large as marbles, one of those dainty snoods with a gem in the middle of the forehead, and a rose over the left-hand bunch of ringlets. Her eyes, reflected in the mirror, show a soul's awakening, and she is altogether a very plump and gracious little figure, with quite a Blessingtonian touch about her. Outside the house where the ball is held, the coachmen are behaving abominably. We hear of 'crushing panels, curses, cries, As coachman meeting coachman tries To win the portal'—it sounds more like motor-polo than a party. But she arrives intact before the 'liveried Stentors' who announce them, and Deloraine, who is evidently ambushed, pounces at once and gets the first dance. She had not, by the way, danced at all at her first ball, only heard Mamma talk. Deloraine's conduct must be unusual, because,

'Some, with jealous envy vexed,
Sneer as they pass and cry : What next ?'

And, as if in answer, there comes a long passage of moralising in the best early Victorian manner, in which we are reminded that all in this gay throng are merely pilgrims in a vale of woe. That :

'E'en here cold Death has held his state,
Here drooping mourners wept their fate,'

and so forth, and so on, *ad nauseam*, 'till scarce we know Which is the vaster—Mirth or Wo.' Oh! 'Wo' by all means—the 'Wos' have it.

Deloraine's conversation is not in this mournful strain.

' He talked of scenery and flowers,
And books that bring us pleasant hours.'

Quite the gentleman. Not 'been to many tangoes lately, eh what?' but how she liked it, bless her. 'And she . . .' but who can paint that heart? I think she liked violets best, or perhaps the chaste snowdrop. Whilst for scenery—anything which gave an extended prospect, particularly with ruins in it. Her books, we learn, had been carefully supervised by Mamma, so, probably, 'The Fairchild Family' was her top notch in literature; but what's the odds so long as you're happy? After this first dance, probably a walked quadrille, back she goes to Mamma, and

' Some twenty youths, with bows, demand
To be presented—Ask her hand
For coming dances—ask in vain—
She dances not that night again.'

'Never make yourself too cheap' was the Percy motto, so down sits Deloraine again to talk to Mamma,

' And all the sprightly words she measures,
Thankful, receives as precious treasures.'

This time Mamma says, 'Girls should not sit up all night,' and they go home, we hope, fairly early, apparently before supper, and Deloraine gets off rather easily, but the only use he makes of his merciful release is to contemplate an early marriage—he, the confirmed old bachelor—

‘ few weeks had sped
Since he had vowed he'd never wed.’

This time the Countess tells us Mary's dreams, and really they were full of the most delightful and ingenuous reserve, quite up to her waking standard.

Now we are taken to an entertainment called a *déjeuner*, which, we learn, is 'a charming thing in Summer.' Alas! after a long diatribe upon the weather alleged by the poets to be Spring, we find it's only a garden party of an extremely protracted kind. It begins in daylight promenading 'through umbrageous trees,' which evidently lasts a long time, and the 'shady walk and rich

'parterre' business seems to be rather overdone. Then comes the *déjeuner*, which seems to consist of *pâtés* and champagne ; then the grounds are illuminated with ten thousand lamps, and somebody sings—that, ladies and gentlemen, is the whole of the entertainment. Of course it doesn't matter to Mary because she was there with intent, in a Victorian sense, and no garden party could be too long for her if only Deloraine is about. Mamma sticks to her like wax, and the bold dashing beaux remark to each other with profound originality that 'the mother was A damask rose of royal red, And Mary was the bud half blown That each one wished to call his own.'

If you want to know what to wear for a *déjeuner*, 'style 1840,' consult the good Mr. Chalon, R.A., who has pictured the acceptable thing with great particularity. There is a certain option—evening dress not indispensable. Mamma wears one of those gemmed snoods with a full-blown rose and lace streamers ; a short-sleeved, low-necked gown of some delicate colour, with white gauntleted kid gloves ruched round the edges. Mary insists upon the bud idea—one in her curls, one in her corsage, and one in a ribbon knot upon her skirt ; ball dress, pearls, and fan. She is evidently prepared to make a night of it. There is a lady in the picture in a feathered coal-scuttle bonnet, dark frock, and ermine stole, but she, too, wears gems. An officer in uniform, smart as the exquisite Captain George Osborne himself, and a man of Count D'Orsay type in evening dress with white cuffs turned back over his coat sleeves. Both these gentlemen bend their enraptured gaze upon the back of Mary's neck, while a disreputable ambassador gives the 'glad eye' to Mamma, and, sad to say, Lady Percy, the damask rose, returns this attention with usury thereto. The scene shows an endless vista of chandeliers in a mirror. Possibly the grounds had become too damp. Mary has a lot of emotion at this festivity. First she fears that Deloraine is not present, and then, horrible moment! 'she stops—there hangs On Deloraine's arm a graceful form.' How she suffered, poor dear, as 'past she saw Lord Deloraine glide With that fair lady at his side.'

This lets in Lady Blessington's address to Jealousy, a passion which Mary endures for a whole hour, when they meet again to find he had been searching for her everywhere, trying to introduce his cousin, Lady Vere. You see, Deloraine was about fed up with Lady Percy and had wisely found a buffer state. Lady Blessington does not say so, but something seems to tell me that even in 1840 young lovers did not always need dear Mamma. Well, at last they get a chance and

'Mary with sweet simplicity
Drops her long lashes 'neath his gaze
That looked his worship and her praise.'

Then they had the refreshment, and, indeed, seem to scramble for it a bit, 'so thickly streams the crowd aside, To taste the goods the gods provide.' How this bridges the gulf of years !

Now comes some good advice to girls. You should not miss this unless you are a chaperon—then you may have as much as you like—but 'ye charmers who would lovers gain, From all but sparrow's meals refrain.' Men, our Countess explains, can stand a certain toying with food if gracefully done with a gold fork, but—as you value the masculine approval and admiration—don't eat in public. 'Three cherries and an almond cake And water tinged with wine' is the limit if you would remain a sylph, an exquisite mystery—in short, an early Victorian ideal. Of course, in the privacy of your chamber you can complete the bestial human process of taking nourishment if you must have more, and when you are married you may go the whole hog.

But to our lovers. Surely now they have side-tracked Mamma and have the run of illuminated grounds, with music, something will happen ; but you forget that modesty existed in those far-off days. She listens to the ballad which spoke Deloraine's very thoughts :

'Tell her, ye stars ! Thou wingèd air,
Breathe to her, Flora's painted host,
That I am true as she is fair ;
Though all *must* love her, I love her most.'

One suspects that the band had been tampered with, but if so, nothing came of it but averted eyelashes.

'Thus, he all fear and she all shame,
He breathes no word to tell his flame.'

Now you know perfectly well that given a similar opening you would not have played that stroke, and had you 'described' Mamma in the distance you would have promptly lost her. Not so our Mary. She 'half fluttered' to her side. I don't believe that you could do a 'half flutter' to save your life.

Of course, Lady Blessington is not going to lose her chance for copy, so we get 'Modesty' full length, and Mary goes home to dream those pink-iced, lavender-scented, cold-boiled-veal sort of dreams of hers again.

'It is a lovely sight to see A maiden in the privacy Of her own

chamber.' Really, Lady Blessington, is this quite nice ? All right it's only the boudoir, and even there ' save her fond sire's no footstep male Has e'er presumed to cross its pale.' Still we get a certain insight into this Zenana, and it is reassuring to know that she has not a single book which cannot be left about when Mamma ' steals in to bless her dutious child.' And—there is a picture with its very appropriate veil of tissue paper. Let us reverently gaze.

The wall decoration is of Victorian Chinese cast ; there is a cabinet with painted panels, surmounted by a nautilus-shell vase with flowers ; a round table with rich tablecloth supports a glass vase of roses, a large Bible, another book, and a writing desk. There is also an easel with a canvas, showing the figure of a lovely female in costume, a harp, a *jardinière* with more roses, and a circular tambour frame with unfinished floral design. And in the centre of this wealth of graceful appointments sits Mary in a semi-circular chair. She wears a lace cap with ribbons, lace-edged *berthe*, silk frock with full sleeves, mittens, and an apron ; in one hand a half-open book of serious cast, and in her dreaming eye the light of holy reverie ; really nothing that any man might not see. ' Listen ! her hand is on the strings, And artless to herself she sings : " O ! never doubt I love thee," ' and so forth ; and then she tries to sketch Deloraine. A step is heard, and she conceals it, and goes on with her singing to deceive dear Mamma. ' O ! love, thou subtle, dexterous cheat,' etc.—moral reflections from Lady B. Now we learn that amongst the pretendants are the ' dipped ' nobleman 'Lord Squander,' and the new man of fashion, ' Sir George Vapid.' Each of these gentlemen sends proposals by letter ; needless to say that these ungrateful favours are soon disposed of by Mamma, who answers both gentlemen with ' proud and rapid,' but surely perfectly ladylike ' pen,' so that's all over. Now comes the question whether it is right to expose the innocence of their daughter to the awful moral perils of the Opera. Mamma's friends smile at her scruples. ' " My daughters, though they sometimes flush," Quoth one high dame, " did never blush, Not even in their earliest teens. I've got a box beneath the Queen's." ' That settled it. The flush and the blush were evidently carefully measured and understood in those days : a sort of crushed strawberry effect was the index of a moral sense braced and stimulated, whilst beetroot indicated real injury to principles. I believe that the whites of their eyes would have turned red at some of the things we like ; alas ! we are not so good as we were, ah me ! Well, they take her to see Grisi as *Norma*, ' a priestess breaking vespers, A mother twice, not once a spouse.' Tut tut ! Another picture

ravished from me here, probably depicting dawning horror, while Mary, very nattily dressed, and with famous Percy Pearls in full view, finds relief from the tragedy in tears. 'Then there came O'er her young brow the blush of shame'—not a mere flush, mind you, but the deeper tone—although, upon looking about her, she could find no companion in agony. Then comes the Ballet—the *première danseuse* bounds in. Imagine it! The effrontery of the creature, with Mary there. 'When Mary saw her vault in air, Her snow-white tunic leaving bare Her limbs, and heard that deafening shout Grow louder as she whirled about, With one leg pointed to the sky, As if the gallery to defy, Surprised and shocked she turned away.' Mamma sees that she has been too adventurous with this bundle of delicious sensibility, 'And rose all pitying to withdraw.' But, you know, Deloraine was watching all the time, and he was simply thrilled by her exquisite superiority to the 'bolder damsels pleased to stay'—there you are, virtue is its own reward.

After this comes the Derby. Lady Blessington didn't seem to be a sportsman, and all the crude jollity of the road to Epsom seems to get on her nerves. For the first time we meet an old friend here: 'And then tobacco's fume exhales to poison e'en the vernal gales'—what would she have made of motor exhaust? 'When Fashion sends her votaries out To mingle with the rabble rout,' it's a beastly day too—our climate gets a rap: 'Around the stand each lady seeks, with crimson nose and purple cheeks,' and all sorts of minor damages to their rigging. Mary felt dreadfully about it all. You see, she was so sensitive. She saw her fellow-creatures get excited over the races, saw women bet with eagerness, 'She marked the scene with sad surprise, And wished her sex more proud, more wise.' Then we get the local colour, and all the fun of the fair. The songs of minstrels, Dorlings c'rect card, thimble-riggers, beggars, gipsies, leave Mary cold: 'She longed, how longed, at home to be.' Then the big race is described, and after that, luncheon, 'When e'en the fair Lay in a meal to make one stare.' Really, Lady Blessington, 'Lay in' is a little bit so-so, don't you think? Well, well, to cut a long story short, the Derby is the penultimate event of which we have a description, and her ladyship lumps the rest of the season with a general phrase or two beginning, 'Time flew on gay and airy wings,' and ending, 'All London, still of Fashion full, sent up a groan, How hot and dull!' Then for a page or two she dwells upon the disappointed hopes of match-making mammas, and the forebodings of the unmated concerning the dullness of spinsterhood, and home life in the country, with nobody but the Rector, the Doctor, and the Squire, and their

accompanying females to associate with ; and the fathers are so rude, too, about the bills, and the girls growing 'stale' on their hands.

All these weeks Deloraine has been watching his pearl amongst women to find out if she could be as wonderful as she seemed—' If but the substance equalled show'—and he had come to the conclusion that she was the real hall-marked article. He at least wasn't going to buy a pig in a poke—but all's serene, and here goes ! ' There came a Splendid Carnival, the season's last, a costume ball.' No, not Covent Garden—he and she would have perished first—a perfectly private and select assembly, with the usual sort of Queens of England, sultanas, nuns, and a ' nice young man ' disguised as an Indian squaw—four pages of description ; and then more moralising upon the changes and chances of this mortal life : ' To his wan eye the gilded room is but a thickly peopled tomb.' Jolly, isn't it ? At last we are allowed to on with the dance. ' Mark yonder youth on whose fond arm Leans one enriched with every charm.' Yes, you have guessed it at once. Now look at the picture. What do you think she went as ? Something original ? Night ! Isn't it a pretty idea!—nothing very voluptuous, or shady—just a sable robe and a gauzy scarf, with gems for stars : ' Large diamonds, of the purest lustre, within her raven tresses cluster.' In our picture this is a coronal with a crescent in it, and in her hand she holds a bunch of poppies; her other hand is clasped by two strong arms to an ample chest, uniformed, epauletted, and covered with orders, and his gold-braided pants are Albertian ; he has flowing locks and side whiskers, no moustache—he wasn't a knut—and they are in the conservatory ! " Say—May I hope ? " O ! who can tell The rapture on his soul which fell When those twin faltering lips betrayed. The " Yes " of that dear conscious maid ? Fancy her retaining consciousness !—she was more robust than one might imagine ; but, all the same, ' She longs to be alone to weep The tears she scarce concealed can keep.' He didn't kneel—probably it was impossible in those trousers—and, upon my honour, not one kiss: it was a solemn occasion, and, after repeating his magnificent phrases, he leads her to Mamma, and tells her he desires to aspire to her daughter's hand. ' Twas fixed next morning he should call And tell the good Lord Percy all.' That was, of course, a mere formality. Then came settlements and all the law's delays, and apparently the thing was very thoroughly done. How many an interview, and letter, he must have added to the lawyer's bill by interference. But at last we get to the wedding presents, and not a single cruet or entrée dish was there ! All jewels apparently. Well, after all, the Victorian taste was right in some

things. But what's this ? ' And now arrived the time to show Her gorgeous and complete Troussseau. Crowds flocked to Regent Street, each day, Enchanted with the rich display, Which Howell's taste and skill provide To deck this young and peerless bride.' This sounds rather up to date ; can it be that Messrs. Howell's took it out in advertisement upon the occasion ? Also was this publicity by ticket, or how did they do it ? I feel quite sure that a great deal of the troussseau was not on view even to Noble Ladies of mature years. She had a lot of nice things—see catalogue—the *peignoir* is the most intimate garment mentioned.

The day arrived, and you have a final picture of Lady Mary as bride, holding her father's hand, and bending one of her famous looks upon Mamma. Orange blossoms and a lace veil worn *a la* mantilla with large sprays over the ears, tight bodice and sleeves, more orange blossoms, full skirt, and knotted scarf sash. Mamma : dark dress, lace pelerine, coal-scuttle bonnet with silk crown, veil, and ostrich feathers. Papa : blue swallow-tail coat, brass buttons and velvet collar, white waistcoat and light trousers, white tie, shirt frills, and apparently the ribbon of the Garter. ' And while the altar she draws nigh, She checks the tear and trembling sigh'—they'll keep. ' The Bishop now the bride has blessed, The husband now her lips hath pressed.' The first time, believe me. The breakfast is slurred over as ' sumptuous.' ' Tis done : behold approach the door A well-appointed chaise and four, More tasteful never left Long Acre, What wonder ? Barker was the maker.' Good for Barker that ! No description of the travelling dress ; just a last kiss and they are off —the sad caress of ' Parents who with breaking heart Behold their mansion's flower depart. They'd keep her still. In vain ! for marriage Were naught without its travelling carriage.'

So this is how it happened, and here we leave the young couple, with every good wish. Says Lady Blessington, ' And now my Muse disdains to tune Her tired harp for the honeymoon.'

I quite sympathise with her fatigue, and to some extent with her reticence, but why this disdain ! There's no need to be nasty about it ! Good Mr. Chalon steps into the breach with a very graceful little vignette in which two of those singularly idiotic little green parakeets, known as love-birds, sit close together upon the thornless stem of a spray of white roses, whilst a sprig of orange blossom mingles its fragrance with that of the rose. Charming and delicate allegory of A.D. 1840.

JOHN KENDAL.

WHO RIDETH ALONE.

CHAPTER VI.

SOUVENT FEMME VARIE.

'Somewhere upon that trackless wide, it may be we shall meet
The Ancient Prophet's caravan, and glimpse his camel fleet.'

WE were an ordinary enough party. Two sturdy desert Bedouins, Dufour and I, followed by two heavily shrouded females and trailed by a whining beggar—Raoul.

I had refused to let Vanbrugh come to Ibrahim Maghruf's house with us, partly because his only chance of not being torn to pieces in the streets was to get quickly back to the Governor's, where he could use a rifle with the rest ; partly because I wanted him to take a last message and appeal to the Governor ; and partly because I did not want a European to be seen going into Ibrahim's, should the place be watched.

I had taken farewell of him in the compound of my quarters, repeating my regrets that I could take no responsibility for his sister, and feeling that I was saying good-bye to an heroic man, already as good as dead. He would not listen to a word about escaping from the town and taking his chance with my party until we were well away, and then shifting for himself. He didn't desert friends in danger, he said ; and with a silent hand-grip and nod we parted, he to hurry to his death and I to take his sister out into the savage desert and the power of more savage fanatics—if she were not killed or captured on the way. . . .

All was ordered confusion and swift achievement at Ibrahim Maghruf's house, as the splendid riding-camels were saddled and the special trotting baggage-camels were loaded with the long-prepared necessities of the journey.

Here Raoul presented to me a big, powerful and surly Arab, apparently, named 'Suleiman the Strong,' who was to be my guide. He was the man who had escaped from one of this new Mahdi's slaughters, and been picked up by the caravan in which Raoul had been carrying on his work, disguised as a camel-driver. . . .

This Suleiman the Strong actually knew the Mahdi, having had the honour of being tortured by him personally ; and apparently he only lived for his revenge. I thought he should be an extremely

useful person, as he knew the wells and water-holes on the route, though I did not like his face and did not intend to trust him an inch farther than was necessary. Anyhow, he would lead me to the Great Oasis all right, for he had much to gain in the French Service—pay, promotion, and pension—and nothing to lose.

Luckily there were spare camels, left behind by Ibrahim Maghruf, as well as my own : and Djikki and Achmet soon had a *bassourab* (a striped hooped tent—shaped something like a balloon) on to a riding-camel for the girls, and another baggage-camel loaded with extra sacks of dates, *girbas* of water, and bags of rice, tea, coffee, sugar, and salt, as well as tinned provisions.

As I was helping the girls into the *bassourab*, showing them how to sit most comfortably—or least uncomfortably—and giving them strictest injunctions against parting the curtains until I gave permission, Raoul touched my arm.

'Better go, Major,' he said. '*It's begun—hark ! . . .*'

As he spoke, a growing murmur, of which I had been subconsciously aware for some minutes—a murmur like the sound of a distant sea breaking on a pebble beach—rose swiftly to a roar, menacing and dreadful, a roar above which individual yells leapt clear like leaping spray above the waves. Rifles banged irregularly, and then came crash after crash of steady volley-firing. . . .

'*En avant—marche !*' said I ; the old mummy opened the compound gate ; and I rode out first, on my giant camel, followed by Djikki leading the one that bore the two girls. After them rode Suleiman, in charge of the baggage-camels, behind which came Achmet. Last of all rode Dufour.

In a minute Raoul ran along the narrow lane in front of us. As we turned into the street that led to the south-eastern gate—luckily not one of the four at which poor Levasseur had stationed detachments—a mob of country-dwelling tribesmen came running along it, waving swords, spears, long guns and good rifles above their heads, and yelling '*Kill ! Kill !*'

'*Halt ! . . . Back ! . . .*' I shouted to Djikki, and brought my little caravan to a standstill at the mouth of the lane, wondering if our journey was to end here in Zaguir. I had my rifle ready, and Dufour, Djikki, Achmet, and Suleiman pushed up beside me with theirs. . . .

The mob drew level.

'*Good-bye, Henri,*' said a voice from below me, and out in front

of them bounded Captain Raoul d'Auray de Redon—a filthy dancing-dervish—spun round and round, and then, with his great staff raised in one hand and his rosary in the other, yelled:

‘*The Faith! The Faith! The Faith!* . . . *Kill! Kill!* . . . This way, my brothers . . . *Quick! Quick!* . . . I can show you where there are infidel dogs . . . *White women!* . . . *Loot!*’ and he dashed off, followed by the mob, down a turning opposite to ours, across the main street. That was the last I ever saw of Raoul. It was the last ever seen of him in life by any Frenchman, save for the glimpses that Levasseur and his comrades got by the light of burning houses of a wild dervish that harangued the mob just when it was about to charge—or led great sections of it off from where it could do most harm to where it could do least. One cannot blame poor Levasseur that he supposed the man to be a blood-mad fanatical ringleader of the mob—and himself ordered and directed the volley that riddled the breast of my heroic friend and stilled for ever the noblest heart that ever beat for France.

As the mob streamed off after their self-constituted leader, I gave the word to resume the order of march, and led the way at a fast camel-trot toward and through the gate, and out into the open country. I breathed more freely outside that accursed City of the Plain. . . . Another small mob came running along the road, and I swerved off across some irrigated market-gardens to make a chord across the arc of the winding road. A few scoundrels detached themselves from the mob and ran towards us, headed by a big brute with a six-foot gun in one hand and a great sword in the other. I did not see how he could use both. He showed me.

As they drew nearer I raised my rifle.

‘Get your *own* loot,’ I snarled. ‘There’s plenty more in Zaguig. . . .’ There was a laugh, and half of them turned back. The leader, however, stuck his sword in the ground, knelt, and aimed his long gun at my camel. Evidently his simple system was to shoot the beasts of mounted men and then hack the head off the rider as he came to earth. However, rifles are quicker than *jezails*, blunderbusses, snap-haunces, or arquebuses, and without reluctance I shot the gentleman through the head. My followers, who, with a disciplined restraint that delighted me, had refrained from shooting without orders, now made up for lost time, and the remainder of the tribesmen fled, doubtless under the impression that they had stirred up a hornets’ nest of loot-laden Touareg. . . .

I again pushed forward quickly, smiling to myself as I

remembered the small voice that had issued from the *bassourab* after I had fired, remarking, 'A bell-ringer for Major Ivan!' Evidently those *bassourab* curtains had been opened in spite of what I had said. . . .

A red glare lit the sky. The mob-howl—that most terrible and soul-shaking of all dreadful sounds—rose higher and louder, and the crashing volleys of disciplined fire-control answered the myriad bangings of the guns and rifles of the mob. At a bend of the road I found myself right into another hurrying crowd, and I visualised the northern roads as covered with them. There was no time to swerve, and into them we rode. 'Hurry, brothers, or you'll be too late,' I shouted, and behind me my four followers yelled 'Kill! Kill!' and we were through the lot, either before they realised that we were so few, or because they took us for what we were—a well-armed band from whom loot would only be snatched with the maximum of bloodshed. And to these wild hill-tribesmen the glare of the burning city was a magnet that would have drawn them almost from their graves.

On once again, and, but for a straggler here and there, we were clear of the danger zone. In a couple of hours we were as much in the lonely uninhabited desert as if we had been a hundred miles from the town. I held the pace, however, and as we drove on into the moonlit silence I tried to put from me the thoughts of what was happening in Zaguig, and of the fate of my beloved friend and of my comrades whom harsh Duty had made me desert in their last agony. . . . I yearned to flee from my very self. . . . I could have wept. . . .

It was after midnight when I drew rein and gave the word to *barrak* the camels and to camp. Before I could interfere, Djikki had brought the girls' camel to its knees with a guttural '*Adary-a-yam*', and with such suddenness that poor Maudie was shot head foremost out of the *bassourab* on to the sand, as a tired voice within said, 'What is it now? Earthquakes? . . .'

Maudie laughed, and Miss Vanbrugh crawled out of the *bassourab*. 'Major,' she observed, 'I'm through with the cabin of the Ship of the Desert. . . . The deck for me. I don't ride any more in that wobbling wigwam after to-night. . . . And there isn't real room for two. Not to be sea-sick in solid comfort.'

'You'll ride exactly where and how I direct, Miss Vanbrugh,' I replied, 'until I can dispose of you somehow.'

'Dear Major Ivan,' she smiled. 'I love to hear him say his

little piece,' and, weary as she was, she hummed a bar of that eternal irritating air.

In a surprisingly short time we had the little *tentes d'abri*, which should have been mine and Dufour's, up and occupied by the girls; fires lighted; water on to boil for tea; a pot issuing savoury odours, as its contents of lamb, rice, butter, vegetables and spice simmered beneath the eye of Achmet, who turned a roasting chicken on a stick. Maudie wanted to 'wait' on Miss Vanbrugh and myself, but was told by her kind employer and friend to want something different. So the two girls, Dufour, and I made a *partie-carrée* at one fire, while Achmet ministered to us; and Djikki and Suleiman fed the camels, and afterwards did what Miss Vanbrugh described as their 'chores,' about another.

After we had eaten, I made certain things clear to Miss Vanbrugh and Maudie, including the matter of the strictest economy of water for their ablutions when we were away from oases; and the absolute necessity of the promptest and exactest obedience to my orders.

After supper the girls retired to the stick-and-canvas camp-beds belonging to Dufour and myself; and I allotted two-hour watches to Djikki, Achmet, and Suleiman, with 'rounds' for Dufour and myself at alternate hours. Visiting the camels and stacked loads, I saw that all was well—as I expected from such experienced desert-men as my followers. . . . None of the water-girbas appeared to be leaking. . . . I rolled myself in a rug and lay down to count the stars. . . .

'Good-morning, Major Ivan,' said a cool voice at daybreak next morning as I issued stores and water for breakfast. 'Anything in the papers this morning?'

'I hope you and Maudie slept well, Miss Vanbrugh,' I replied. 'Have you everything you want?'

'No, Kind Sir, she said,' was the reply. 'I want a hot bath and some tea, and a chafing-dish—and then I'll show you some real cookery.'

She looked as fresh as the glorious morning, and as sweet in Arab dress as in one of her own frocks.

'You may perhaps get a bath in a week or two,' I replied.

'A hot bath?' she asked.

'Yes. In a saucepan,' I promised.

'And to-day we're going to make a forced march,' I added,

'with you and Maudie safe in the *bassourab*. After that it will have to be the natural pace of the baggage-camels, and we'll travel mostly by night—and you can ride as you please—until we bid you farewell.'

'Why at night?' asked the girl. 'Not just for my whims?'

'No. . . . Cooler travelling,' I replied, 'and the camels go better. They can't see to graze—and our enemies can't see us.'

'Of course. I was afraid you were thinking of what I said about the *bassourab*, Major, and planning to save the women and children. . . .'

'How's Maudie?' I asked.

'All in, but cheerful,' she replied. 'She's not used to riding, and her poor back's breaking.'

'And yours?' I asked.

'Oh, I grew up on a horse,' she laughed, 'and can grow old on a camel. . . . Let me dye my face and dress like a man, and carry a rifle, Major. Maudie could have the *bassourab* to herself then, with the curtains open.'

'I'll think about it,' I replied.

All that day we marched, Suleiman riding far ahead as scout and guide. . . .

After going my rounds that night I had a talk with this fellow, and a very interesting and illuminating talk it was. I learned, in the first place, that the Emir el Hamel el Kebir was a desert 'foundling' of whom no one knew anything whatsoever. This looked bad, and suggested one of the 'miraculous' appearances of the Mahdi el Senussi, or an imitation of it. Also, from Suleiman's grudging admissions, and allowing for his obvious hatred, the Emir appeared to be a mighty worker of miracles in the sight of all men—an Invincible Commander of the Faithful in battle, and a man of great ability and power. He was evidently adored by his own tribe—or the tribe of his adoption, to whom he had appeared in the desert—and apparently they regarded their present importance, success, and wealth as their direct reward from Allah for their hospitable acceptance of this 'Prophet' when he had appeared to them.

I reflected upon my earlier studies of the British campaigns in Egypt against Osman Digna, and Mohammed Ahmed the Mahdi, and the Khalifa—and upon the fate of any Englishman who had ridden—with two white women—into the camp of any of these savage and fanatical warriors.

On my trying to get some idea of the personality and character of the Emir, Suleiman could only growl: 'He is a treacherous Son of Satan. He poisoned the old Sheikh whose salt he had eaten, and he tortured me. *Me*, who should have succeeded the good old man—to whom I was as a son. . . .'

This sounded bad, but there are two sides to every story, and I could well imagine our Suleiman handsomely earning a little torture.

'I fled from the tribe,' continued Suleiman, 'and went to the Emir Mohammed Bishari bin Mustapha Korayim abd Rabu, who took me in and poured oil and wine into my wounds. . . . Him also this *Emir el Hamel el Kebir* slew, falling upon him treacherously in the Pass of Bab-el-Haggar, and again I had to flee for my life. A caravan found me weeks later at the point of death in the desert, and they took me with them. . . . The man who brought me to you befriended me from the first, and showed me how to make a living as well as how to get my revenge on this foul pretender and usurper. This "*Emir*" el Hamel'—and the gentle Suleiman spat vigorously.

'Are you a *Franzawi*, Sidi?' he asked, after a brief silence.

'Like you, I work for them,' I replied. 'They pay splendidly those who serve them well; but their vengeance is terrible upon those who betray them—and their arm is long,' I added.

'Allah smite them,' he growled; and asked, 'Will they send an army and wipe out this el Hamel?'

'What do I know?' I replied. 'It is now for us to spy upon him and report to them, anyhow.'

'Let him beware my knife,' he grunted, and I bethought me that were I a Borgia, or my country another that I could mention, here would be one way of solving the problem of the new Mahdi menace.

'The *Franzawi* hire no assassins, nor allow assassination,' I replied coldly. . . . 'Keep good watch . . .' and left him, pondering many things in my heart. . . .

Oh for a friendly north-bound caravan to whose leader I might give these two girls, with a reasonably easy mind, and every hope that they would be safe. . . .

Poor old de Lannec. . . . None of that nonsense for *me*!

Day followed lazy day and night followed active night, as weeks became a month and we steadily marched south-east; but

no caravan gladdened my eyes, nor sight of any human being, away from the few oases, save once a lonely Targui scout, motionless on his *mehara* camel on a high sand-hill at evening. After seeing this disturbing sight, I made a forced march all through the night and far into the next day, and hoped that we had escaped unseen and unfollowed.

I was very troubled in mind during these days. Not only was my anxiety as to the fate of the two girls constant, but I was annoyed to find that I thought rather more about Mary Vanbrugh than about the tremendously important work that lay before me. My mind was becoming more occupied by this slip of a girl, and less by my mission, upon which might depend the issues of Peace and War, the lives of thousands of men, the loss or gain of an Empire perhaps—certainly of milliards of francs and years of the labour of soldiers and statesmen. . . . I could not sleep at night for thinking of this woman, and for thinking of her fate; and again for thinking of how she was disturbing my thoughts which should have been concentrated on Duty. . . .

And she was adding to my trouble by her behaviour toward me personally. At times she appeared positively to loathe me, and again at times she was so kind that I could scarcely forbear to take her in my arms—when she called me ‘*Nice Major Ivan*,’ and showed her gratitude—though for what, God knows, for life was hard for her and for poor Maudie, the brave, uncomplaining souls. For the fact that her brother’s fate must be a terrible grief to her I made allowance, and ascribed to it her changeful and capricious attitude toward me.

Never shall I forget one perfect night of full moon, by a glorious palm-shaded desert pool, one of those little oases that seem like Paradise and make the desert seem even more like Hell. It was an evening that began badly, too. While fires were being lighted, camels fed, and tents pitched, the two girls went to bathe. Strolling, I met Maudie returning, and she looked so fresh and sweet, and my troubled soul was so full of admiration of her, for her courage and her cheerfulness, that, as she stopped and, with a delightful smile, said :

‘Excuse me, sir, but is that Mr. Dufour a *married* man?’ I laughed and, putting a brotherly arm about her, kissed her warmly.

With remarkable speed and violence she smacked my face.

'Maudie!' said I aghast, 'you misunderstood me entirely!'

'Well, you won't misunderstand *me* again, sir, anyhow!' replied Maudie, with a toss of her pretty head, and marched off, chin in air. As she did so, a tinkling laugh from among the palms apprised me of the fact that Miss Vanbrugh had been an interested witness of this romantic little episode!

Nothing was said at dinner that evening, however, and after it I sat apart with Mary Vanbrugh and had one of the delightfullest hours of my life. She began by speaking of her brother Otis, and the possibilities of his being yet alive, and then of her parents and of her other brother and sister. Papa was what she called 'a bold bad beef-baron,' and I gathered that he owned millions of acres of land and hundreds of thousands of cattle in Western America. A widower, and, I gathered, a man the warmth of whose temper was only exceeded by the warmth of his heart. The other girl, in giving birth to whom his beloved wife had died, was, strangely enough, the very apple of his eye, and she it was who kept house for him while Mary wandered.

The older brother had apparently been too like his father to agree with him.

'Dad surely was hard on Noel,' she told me, 'and Noel certainly riled Dad. . . . Would he go to school or college? Not he! He rode ranch with the cowboys and was just one of them. Slept down in their bunk-house too. Ran away from school as often as he was sent—and there Dad would find him, hidden by the cowboys, when he thought the boy was 'way East.'

'Dad was all for education, having had none himself. Noel was all for avoiding it, having had some himself. . . . One merry morn he got so fresh with Dad that, when he rode off, Dad pulled himself together and lassoed him—just roped him like a steer—pulled him off his pony, and laid into him with his quirt!'

'Noel jumped up and pulled his gun. Then he threw it on the ground and just said, "Good-bye, Dad. I'm through," and that was the last we saw of brother Noel. . . . How I did cry! I worshipped Noel, although he was so much older than I. So did Dad—although Otis never gave him a minute's trouble, and took to education like a duck. . . . He's a Harvard graduate and Noel's a "rough-neck," if he's alive. . . .'

'And you never saw Noel again?' I said. I wanted to keep her talking, to listen to that beautiful voice and watch that lovely face.

'Never. Nor heard from him. We heard of him though once—that after hoboing all over the States he was an enlisted man in a cavalry regiment, and then that a broncho-buster, whom our overseer knew, had seen him on a cattle-ship bound for Liverpool.'

'And now you roam the wide world o'er, searching for the beloved playmate of your youth?' I remarked, perhaps fatuously.

'Rubbish!' was the reply. 'I've almost forgotten what he looked like, and might not know him if I met him. . . . I'd just love to see him again though—dear old Noel. He never had an enemy but himself, and never did a mean thing. . . . And now tell me all about *you*, Major Ivan, you stern, harsh, terrible man!' . . .

I talked about myself, as a man will do—to the right woman. And by-and-by I took her hand and she did not withdraw it—rather clasped it as I said: 'Do you know, the devil tried to tempt me last night to give the order to saddle up and ride north, and put you in a place of safety. . . .'

'Did you fall, Major?' she asked quietly—and yes, she did return my pressure of her strong little hand.

'I did not even listen to the tempter,' I replied promptly. 'But I'm feeling horribly worried and frightened and anxious about you. . . .'

'Business down yonder urgent, Major?' she asked.

'Very.'

'And your chief's trusting you to put it through quick, neat, and clean?'

'Yes.'

'Then defy the devil and all his works, Major,' she said, 'and don't let my welfare interfere with yours. . . .'

'I shan't, Miss Vanbrugh,' I replied. 'But if we could only meet a caravan. . . .'

'Nonsense! You don't play Joseph's Brethren with *me*, Major.'

'How can I take you into the power of a man who, for all I know, may be a devil incarnate? . . . I should do better to shoot you myself. . . .'

'I was going to say, "Make a camp near the oasis and ride in alone," but I shan't let you do that, Major.'

'It is what I had thought of—but a man like this Emir would know all about us and our movements long before we were near

his territory. . . . And what happens to you, if I am made a prisoner or killed ? Dufour would not go without me—nor would Achmet and Djikki for that matter.'

' You are going to carry on, just as if I were not here, my friend,' she said, ' and I'm coming right there with you—to share and share alike. I can always shoot myself when I'm bored with things. . . . So can Maudie. She's got a little gun all right. . . . I wouldn't be a drag on you, Major, for anything in the world. . . . Duty before pleasure—of course. . . .'

And as she said those words, and rubbed her shoulder nestlingly against mine, I took her other hand . . . I drew her towards me . . . I nearly kissed her smiling lips . . . when she snatched her hand away, and, springing up, pointed in excitement towards the oasis.

' What is it ? ' I cried in some alarm, for my nerves were frayed with sleeplessness.

' I thought I saw a kind of winged elephant cavorting above the trees. You know—like a flying shrimp or whistling water-rat of the upper air, Major Ivan. . . .'

And as I raged, she laughed and sang that cursed air again, with words this time—and the words were—

There are heroes in plenty, and well known to fame,
In the ranks that are led by the Czar ;
But among the most reckless of name or of fame
Was *Ivan Petruski Skivah*.
He could imitate Irving, play euchre, or pool,
And perform on the Spanish guitar :—
In fact, quite the cream of the Muscovite team
Was *Ivan Petruski Skivah*.

Damn the girl, she had been laughing at me the whole time !

I gave the order to saddle up, and did a double march on towards the south of the rising sun—when it did rise—to punish her for her impertinence and to remind her that she was only with me on sufferance. . . . She should see who was the one to laugh last in *my* caravan. . . .

And *mon Dieu* ! What a fool de Lannec was !

CHAPTER VII.

THE TOUAREG—AND ‘DEAR IVAN.’

ONE or two days later, as we jogged along in the ‘cool’ of the evening, Dufour, the trusty rearguard of my little caravan, rode up to me.

‘We’re followed, sir,’ said he. ‘Touareg, I think. I have sent Djikki back to scout.’

‘If they’re Touareg they’ll surround our next camp and rush us suddenly,’ I said. ‘Our night-travelling has upset them, as there has been no chance for the surprise-at-dawn that they’re so fond of.’

‘They’ll follow us all night and attack when they think we are busy making camp to-morrow morning,’ said Dufour.

‘We’ll try to shake them off by zigzagging and circling,’ I replied. ‘If it weren’t for the women, it would be amusing to ride right round behind them and attack. . . . They may be only a small gang and not a *harka*.’

Mary Vanbrugh closed up. I had been riding ahead in haughty displeasure, until Dufour came to me. I had done with Mary Vanbrugh. ‘What is it, Major?’ she asked.

‘Nothing, Miss Vanbrugh,’ I replied.

‘What men-folk usually wag their heads and their tongues about,’ she agreed.

Maudie’s *bassourab*-adorned camel overtook us as we dropped into a walk and then halted.

‘What is it, Mr. Dufour?’ I heard her ask.

‘Sheikhs!’ replied Dufour maliciously, and I wondered if his face had also been slapped. I looked at Maudie. Methought she beamed joyously.

Half an hour later, Djikki of the wonderful eyesight came riding up at top speed.

‘Veiled Touareg,’ he said. ‘The Forgotten of God. About five hands of fingers. Like the crescent moon—’ from which I knew that we were being followed by about five and twenty Touareg, and that they were riding in a curved line—the horns of which would encircle us at the right time. There was nothing for it but to ride on. We were five rifles—six counting Mary Vanbrugh—and shooting from behind our camels we should give a good account of ourselves against mounted men advancing over open country.

Nor would so small a gang resolutely push home an attack upon so straight-shooting and determined a band as ourselves. But what if they managed to kill our camels?

'Ride after Suleiman as fast as you can, Miss Vanbrugh, with Maudie. Achmet will ride behind you,' said I. 'You and I and Djikki will do rearguard, Dufour. . . .'

'Don't be alarmed if you hear firing,' I added to the girls.

'Oh, Major, I shall gibber with fright, and look foolish in the face,' drawled Mary Vanbrugh, and I was under the impression that Maudie's lips parted to breathe the word '*Sheikhs!*'

We rode in this order for an hour, and I then left Djikki on a sand-dune, with orders to watch while the light lasted. I thought he would get our pursuers silhouetted against the sunset and see if their numbers had increased, their formation or direction changed and judge whether their pace had quickened or slackened.

'As soon as it is dark, we'll turn sharp-right for a couple of hours, and then left again,' I said to Dufour.

'Yes, sir,' said he. 'They won't be able to follow tracks in the dark. Not above a walking pace.'

He had hardly spoken when a rifle cracked. . . . Again twice. . . . Aimed from us, by the sound. . . . Djikki! . . . We wheeled round together and rode back along our tracks. We passed Djikki's barraked camel and saw the Soudanese lying behind the crest of sand-hill. He stood up and came down to us.

'Three,' he said. 'Swift scouts in advance of the rest. I hit one man and one camel. The other fled. Four hundred metres.

For a Soudanese it was very fine marksmanship.

'It'll show them we're awake, anyhow,' said Dufour; and we rode off quickly, to overtake the others.

As soon as it was as dark as it ever is in the star-lit desert, I took the lead, and turned sharply from our line as we were riding over a rocky stony patch that would show no prints of the soft feet of camels. For an hour or two I followed the line, and then turned sharply to the left, parallel with our original track. Thereafter I dropped to the rear, leaving Dufour to lead. I preferre to rely upon his acquired scientific skill rather than upon Suleiman's desert sense of direction, when I left the head of the caravan at night. Dropping back, I halted until I could only just see the outline of the last rider, Achmet, sometimes as a blur of white in the starshine, sometimes as a silhouette against the blue-black starry sky. . . . Vast, vast emptiness. . . . Universes beyond.

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universes. . . . Rhythmic fall of soft feet on sand. . . . Rhythmic swaying of the great camel's warm body. . . . World swaying. . . . Stars swaying. . . .

I will not falsely accuse myself of having fallen asleep, for I do not believe I slept—though I have done such a thing on the back of a camel. But I was certainly slightly hypnotised by staring and the perfect rhythm of my camel's tireless, changeless trot. . . . And I had been very short of sleep for weeks. . . . Perhaps I did sleep for a few seconds? . . . Anyhow, I came quite gradually from a general inattentiveness toward the phenomena of reality, to an interest therein, and then to an awareness that gripped my heart like the clutch of a cold hand. First I noted dully that I had drawn level with Achmet and was some yards to his right. . . . Then that Djikki, or Suleiman perhaps, was riding a few yards to my right. . . . And then that some one else was close behind me.

I must have got right into the middle of the caravan. Curious. . . . *Why, what was this?* . . . I rubbed my eyes. . . . None of us carried a lance or spear of any kind! It was then that my blood ran cold, for I knew I was *riding with the Touareg!*

I pulled myself together and did some quick thinking. Did each of them take me for some other member of their band who had ridden to the front and been overtaken again? Or were they chuckling to themselves at the poor fool whom they had outwitted, and who was now in their power? . . . Was it their object to ride on with me, silently, until the Touareg band and the caravan were one body—and then each robber select his victim and slay him? What should I do? My rifle was across my thighs. No; I could not have been asleep or I should have dropped it.

I slowly turned my head and looked behind me. I could see no others—but it was very dark and others might be near, besides the three whom I could distinguish clearly. Achmet was not in sight. What should I do? . . . *Work, poor brain, work!* Her life depends on it. . . . Could I draw ahead of them sufficiently fast to overtake the caravan, give a swift order, and have my men wheeled about and ready to meet our pursuers with a sudden volley and then rapid fire? I could try, anyhow. I raised the long camel-stick that dangled from my wrist, and my camel quickened its pace instantly. There is never any need to strike a well-trained *mehara*. . . . The ghostly riders to right and left of me kept their positions. . . . I had gained nothing. . . .

I must not appear to be trying to escape. . . . With faint pressure on the left nose-rein of my camel, I endeavoured to edge imperceptibly toward the shadow on my left. I would speak to him as though I were a brother Targui, as soon as I was close enough to shoot with certainty if he attacked me. The result showed me that the raiders had not taken me for one of themselves—I could get no nearer to the man, nor draw farther from the rider on my right. . . .

Wits against wits—and Mary Vanbrugh's life in the balance. . . .

Gently I drew rein, and slowed down very gradually. My silent nightmare companions did the same. This would let the caravan draw ahead of us, and give my men more time for action, when the time for action came.

Slower and slower grew my pace, and I drooped forward, nodding like a man asleep, my eyes straining beneath my *haik* to watch these devils who shepherded me along. My camel dropped into a walk, and very gradually the two shadows converged upon me to do a silent job with sword or spear. . . . And what of the man behind me? The muscles of my shoulder-blades writhed as I thought of the cold steel that even then might be within a yard of my back. . . .

Suddenly I pulled up, raised my rifle, and fired carefully, and with the speed that has no haste, at the rider on my right. I aimed where, if I missed his thigh, I should hit his camel, and hoped to hit both. As my rifle roared in the deep silence of the night, I swung left for the easier shot, fired again, and drove my camel bounding forward. I crouched low, as I worked the bolt of my rifle, in the hope of evading spear-thrust or sword-stroke from behind. As I did so a rifle banged behind me, at a few yards range, and I felt as though my left arm had been struck with a red-hot axe. With the right hand that held the rifle, I wheeled my camel round in a flash, steadied the beast and myself and, one-handed, fired from my hip at a camel that suddenly loomed up before me. Then I wheeled about again and sent my good beast forward at racing speed.

My left arm swung useless, and I could feel the blood pouring down over my hand, in a stream. . . . This would not do. . . . I shoved my rifle under my thigh, and with my right hand raised my left and got the arm up so that I could hold it by the elbow, with the left hand beneath my chin. I fought off the feeling of faintness caused by shock and the loss of blood—and wondered if Suleiman, Djikki, Achmet and Dufour would shoot first and

challenge afterwards, as I rode into them. . . . Evidently I had brought down the three camels at which I had aimed—not a difficult thing to do, save in darkness, and when firing from the back of a camel, whose very breathing sways one's rifle. . . .

I was getting faint again. . . . It would soon pass off. . . . If I could only plug the holes and improvise a sling. . . . As the numbness of the arm wore off and I worried at it, I began to hope and believe that the bone was not broken. . . . Fancy a shattered elbow-joint, in the desert, and with the need to ride hard and constantly. . . .

I was aware of three dark masses in line. . . .

'Major! *Shout!*' cried a voice, and with great promptitude I shouted—and three rifles came down from the firing position.

'Where is she?' I asked.

'I made her ride on with Achmet, hell-for-leather,' replied Dufour. 'I swore she'd help us more that way, till we can see what's doing. . . . What happened, sir?'

I told him.

'They'll trail us all right,' said Dufour. 'Those were scouts, and there would be a line of connecting-links between them and the main body. Shall we wait, and get them one by one?'

'No,' I replied. 'They'd circle us and they'd get the others while we waited here. It'll be daylight soon. . . .'

It was in the dim daylight of the false dawn that we sighted the baggage-camels of the caravan.

'Those baggage-camels will have to be left,' said Dufour.

'You can't ride away from Touareg,' I answered. 'It's hopeless. We've got to fight, if they attack. They may not do so, having been badly stung already. But the Targui is a vengeful beast. It isn't as though they were ordinary Bedouin. . . .'

The light grew stronger, and we drew near to the others. I told Djikki to drop back and to fire directly he saw anything of the robbers—thus warning us, and standing them off while we made what preparations we could.

I suddenly felt extremely giddy, sick, and faint. My white burnous made a ghastly show. I was wet through, from my waist to my left foot, with blood. I must have lost a frightful lot. . . . artery. . . . Help! . . .

The next thing that I knew was that I was lying with my head on Maudie's lap, while Mary Vanbrugh, white of face but deft of

hand, bandaged my arm and strapped it across my chest. She had evidently torn up some linen garment for this purpose. Mary's eyes were fixed on her work, and Maudie's on the horizon. The men were crouched each behind his kneeling camel.

'Dear Major Ivan,' murmured Mary as she worked.

I shut my eyes again, quickly and without shame. It was heavenly to rest thus for a few minutes.

'Oh, is he *dead*, miss?' quavered poor Maudie.

'We shall all be dead in a few minutes, I expect, child,' replied Mary. 'Have you a safety-pin? . . . Dead as cold mutton. . . . Sheikhs, my dear. . . . Shall I shoot you at the last, Maudie, or would you rather do it yourself?'

'Well—if you wouldn't *mind*, miss? Thank you very much if it's not troubling you.'

Silence.

'Dear Major Ivan,' came a sweet whisper. 'Oh, I *have* been a beast to him, Maudie. . . . Yes, I'll shoot you with pleasure, child. . . . How *could* I be such a wretch as to treat him like that! . . . He is the bravest, nicest, sternest . . .'

I felt a cad, and opened my eyes—almost into those of Mary, whose lips were just . . . were they . . . were they? . . .

'Yes, miss,' said Maudie, her eyes and thoughts afar off. 'He is a beautiful gentleman. . . .'

'Hallo! the patient has woken up!' cried Mary, drawing back quickly. 'Had a nice nap, Major? How do you feel? . . . Here, have a look into the cup that cheers and inebriates'—and she lifted a mug, containing cognac and water, to my lips.

I drank the lot and felt better.

'My heart come into my mouth it did, sir, when I saw you fall head-first off that camel. You fair *splashed* blood, sir,' said Maudie. 'Clean into me mouth me heart come, sir.'

'Hope you swallowed the little thing again, Maud. Such a sweet *garden* of romance as it is! . . . "Come into the maud, Garden!" for a change. . . . That's the way, Major. . . . Drinks it up like milk and looks round for more. Got a nice clean flesh wound and no bones touched, the clever man. . . .'

I sat up. 'Get those camels farther apart, Dufour,' I shouted. 'Absolutely focal point to draw concentrated fire bunched like that. . . .'

Nobody must think that I was down and out, and that the reins were slipping from a sick man's grasp.

The men were eating dates as they watched, and Mary had opened a tin of biscuits and one of sardines. 'Hark at the Major saying his piece,' a voice murmured from beneath a flowing *kayfiyah* beside me. 'Isn't he fierce this morning!'

I got to my feet and pulled myself together. . . . Splendid. . . . Either the brandy, or the idea of a kiss I foolishly fancied that I had nearly received, had gone to my head. I ate ravenously for the next ten minutes, and drank cold tea from a water-bottle.

'There's many a slip between the kiss and the lip,' I murmured anon, in a voice to match the one that had last spoken. I was unwise.

'Wrong again, Major Ivan Petruski Skivah! I was just going to blow a smut off your grubby little nose,' was the prompt reply, and I seemed to hear thereafter a crooning of :

'But among the most reckless of name and of fame
Was Ivan Petruski Skivah.'

. . . and perform on the Spanish guitar:—
In fact, quite the cream of 'Intelligence' team
Was Ivan Petruski Skivah . . .'

as Miss Vanbrugh cleaned her hands with sand and then re-packed iodine and boric lint in the little medicine-chest.

I managed to get on to my camel, and soon began to feel a great deal better, perhaps helped by my ferocious anger at myself for collapsing. Still, blood is blood, and one misses it when too much is gone.

'Ride on with Achmet again,' I called to Miss Vanbrugh, and bade the rest mount. 'We'll keep on now, just as long as we can,' I said to Dufour, and ordered Djikki to hang as far behind us as was safe. In a matter of that sort, Djikki's judgment was as good as anybody's. . . .

Dufour then told me a piece of news. A few miles to the south-east of us was, according to Suleiman, a *shott*, a salt-lake or marsh that extended to the base of a chain of mountains. The strip of country between the two was very narrow. We could camp there. If the Touareg attacked us, they could only do so on a narrow front, and could not possibly surround us. To go north round the lake, or south round the mountains, would be several days' journey. 'That will be the place for us, sir,' concluded Dufour.

'Yes,' I agreed, 'if the Touareg are not there before us.'

CHAPTER VIII.

MY ABANDONED CHILDREN.

THAT would have been one of the worst days of my life, and that is saying a good deal, had it not been for a certain exaltation and joy that bubbled up in my heart as I thought of the look in Miss Vanbrugh's eyes when I had opened mine. . . . What made it so terrible was not merely the maddening ache in my arm that seemed to throb in unison with the movement of my camel, but the thought of what I must do if this pass was what I pictured it to be, and if the Touareg attacked us in strength. It would be a very miserable and heart-breaking duty—to ride on and leave my men to hold that pass—that I might escape and fulfil my mission. How could I leave Dufour to die that I might live? How could I desert Achmet and Djikki, my servants and my friends? . . .

However—it is useless to attempt to serve one's country in the Secret Service, if one's private feelings, desires, loves, sorrows, likes and dislikes are to be allowed to come between one and one's country's good. . . . Poor de Lannec! How weak and unworthy he had been. . . .

There was one grain of comfort—nothing would be gained by my staying and dying with my followers. . . . It would profit them nothing at all. . . . They would die just the same. . . . If the Touareg could, by dint of numbers, overcome four, they could overcome five. I could not save them by staying with them. . . . But oh, the misery, the agony, of ordering them to hold that pass while I rode to safety! How could I give the order: 'Die, but do not retire—until *I* have had time to get well away'?

And the girls? Would they be a hindrance to me on two of the fleetest camels? . . . And perhaps any of my little band who did not understand my desertion of them would think they were fighting to save the women, whom I was taking to safety—if I decided to take them. But it would be ten times worse than leaving my comrades in Zaguig. . . . How could I leave *Mary Vanbrugh*—perhaps to fall, living, into the hands of those bestial devils?

The place proved an ideal spot for a rearguard action, and the Touareg were not before us. Lofty and forbidding rocks rose high, sheer from the edge of a malodorous swamp, from whose salt-caked edge grew dry bents that rattled in the wind. Between the swamp

and the stone cliffs was a tract of boulder-strewn sand, averaging a hundred yards in width. Here we camped, lit fires, and prepared to have a long and thorough rest—unless the Touareg attacked—until night.

Achmet quickly pitched the little *tentes d'abri*, fixed the camp-beds for the girls, and unrolled the ‘flea-bags’ and thin mattresses, while his kettle boiled. It was a strangely peaceful and domestic scene—in view of the fact that sudden death—or slow torture—loomed so large and near. Dufour himself ungirthed and fed the camels while Suleiman stood upon a rock and stared out into the desert. He could probably see twice as far as Dufour or I. . . .

‘*Into that tent, Major,*’ said the cool, sweet voice that I was beginning to like again. ‘I have made the bed as comfy as I can. Have Achmet pull your boots off. I’ll come in ten minutes or so, and dress your arm again.’

‘And what about *you*? ’ I replied. ‘I’m not going to take your tent. I am quite all right now, thanks.’

‘Maudie and I are going to take turns on the other bed,’ she replied. ‘And you *are* going to take “my” tent, and lie down too. What’s going to happen to the show if you get ill? Suppose you get fever? Suppose your arm mortifies and falls into the soup? . . . Let’s get the wound fixed again, before those low-brow Touareg shoot us up again. . . . You’ll find a cold water compress very soothing. . . . Go along, Major. . . .’

I thought of something more soothing than that—the touch of cool, deft fingers.

‘I’d be shot daily if you were there to bind me up, Miss Van-brugh,’ I said as I gave in to her urgency, and went to the tent.

‘Well—perhaps they’ll oblige after breakfast, Major, and plug your other arm,’ observed this most unsentimental young woman.

‘But, my dear! ’ I expostulated. ‘If I had no arms at all, how could I . . . ?’

‘Just what *I* was thinking, Major,’ was the reply, as, to hide a smile, she stooped over the big suit-case and extracted the medicine-chest. . . .

As we hastily swallowed our meal of dates, rice, biscuits and tinned milk, I gave my last orders to Dufour. . . .

‘You’ll hold this pass while there is a man of you alive,’ I said.

‘*Oui, mon Commandant,*’ replied the brave man, with the same quiet nonchalance that would have marked his acknowledgment of an order to have the camels saddled.

'Should the Touareg abandon the attempt (which they will not do), any survivor is to ride due south-east until he reaches the Great Oasis.'

'Oui, mon Commandant.'

'Even if Suleiman is killed, there will be no difficulty in finding the place, but we'll hear what he has to say about wells and water-holes—while he is still hale and hearty.'

'Oui, mon Commandant.'

'But I fear there won't be any survivors—four against a *harka*—say, a hundred to one. . . . But you must hold them up until I am well away. . . . They won't charge while your shooting is quick and accurate. . . . When they do, they'll get you, of course. . . . Don't ride for it at the last moment. . . . See it through here, to give the impression that you are the whole party. I must not be pursued. . . . Die here. . . .'

'Oui, mon Commandant.'

'Excuse me, Major de Beaujolais,' cut in the voice of Miss Vanbrugh, icily cold and most incisive, 'is it possible that you are talking about *deserting your men*? . . . Leaving them to die here while you escape? . . . Ordering them to remain here to increase your own chance of safety, in fact? . . .'

'I was giving instructions to my subordinate, who will remain here with the others, Miss Vanbrugh,' I replied coldly. 'Would you be good enough to refrain from interrupting. . . .?'

My uncle's words burned before my eyes!—'A woman, of course! . . . He turned aside from his duty. . . . Exit de Lannec. . . .'

Miss Vanbrugh put her hand on Dufour's arm.

'If you'll be so kind as to enrol me, Mr. Dufour—I am a very good rifle shot,' she said. 'I shall dislike perishing with you intensely, but I should dislike deserting you infinitely more,' and she smiled very sweetly on my brave Dufour. He kissed her hand respectfully and looked inquiringly at me.

'And Maudie?' I asked Miss Vanbrugh. 'Is she to be a romantic heroine, too? I hope she can throw stones better than most girls, for I understand she has never fired a rifle or pistol in her life. . . .'

'I think you really are the most insufferable and detestable creature I have ever met,' replied Miss Vanbrugh.

'Interesting, but hardly germane to the discussion,' I replied. 'Listen, Miss Vanbrugh,' I continued. 'If the Touareg are upon

us, as I have no doubt they are, I am going to ride straight for the Great Oasis. Dufour, Achmet, Djikki and Suleiman will stand the Touareg off as long as possible. Eventually my men will be rushed and slaughtered. If sufficiently alive, when overcome and seized, they will be tortured unbelievably. The Touareg may or may not then follow me, but they will have no chance of overtaking me as I shall have a long start. I shall have the best of the riding camels, and I shall make forced marches. . . . Now—I see no reason why you and Maudie should not accompany me *for just as long as you can stand the pace*. . . .

'Oh, Major—we might conceivably hinder you and so imperil your most precious life, endanger your safety—so essential to France and the world in general. . . .'

'I'll take good care you don't do that, Miss Vanbrugh,' I replied. 'But, as I say, there is no reason why you and your maid should not ride off with me—though, I give you fair warning, I shall probably ride for twenty-four hours without stopping—and you will be most welcome. In fact, I pray you to do so. . . . Trust me to see to it that you are no hindrance nor source of danger to the success of my mission. . . .'

'Oh—I fully trust you for *that*, Major de Beaujolais,' she replied bitterly.

'Then be ready to start as soon as we get word from Djikki that they are coming,' I said. 'Once again, there is no reason why you should not come with me. . . .'

'Thank you—but there is a very strong reason. I would sooner die twice over. . . . I remain here,' was the girl's reply. 'I can think of only one thing worse than falling alive into the hands of these beasts—and that is deserting my friends, Mr. Dufour, Achmet and Djikki. . . . Why, I wouldn't desert even that evil-looking Suleiman after he had served me faithfully. . . . I wouldn't desert a dog. . . .'

'And Maudie?' I asked.

'She shall do exactly as she pleases,' answered the girl.

Turning to Maudie, who was listening open-mouthed, she said: 'Will you ride off with Major de Beaujolais, my child, or will you stay with me? You may get to safety with this gallant gentleman—if you can keep him in sight. . . . It is death to stay here, apparently, but I will take care that it *is* death and not torture for you, my dear.'

'Wouldn't the Sheikhs treat us well, miss?' asked Maudie.

'Oh, *Sheikhs!*' snapped Miss Vanbrugh. 'These are two-legged *beasts*, my good idiot. They are human wolves, torturing *devils*, merciless *brutes*. . . . What is the worst thing you've got in your country ?'

'Burglars, miss,' replied Maudie promptly.

'Well, the ugliest cut-throat burglar that ever hid under your bed, or came in at your window in the middle of the night, is just a dear little woolly lambkin, compared with the best of these murderous savages. . . .'

Maudie's face fell.

'I thought perhaps these was Sheikhs, miss. . . . Like in the book. . . . But, anyhow, I was going to do what you do, miss, and go where you go—of course, please, miss.'

'I am afraid you are another of those ordinary queer creatures that think faithfulness to friends and loyalty to comrades come first, dear,' said Miss Vanbrugh, and gave Maudie's hand a squeeze. 'But you'll do what I tell you, Maudie, won't you ?'

'That's what I'm here for, please, miss, thank you,' replied the girl.

'Well, you're going with Major de Beaujolais,' said Miss Vanbrugh. 'I hate sending you off with a gentleman of his advanced views and superior standards—but I should hate shooting you, even more.'

'Yes, miss, thank you,' answered Maudie, and I rose and strolled to my tent. Ours is not an easy service. Duty is a very jealous God. . . .

Miss Vanbrugh came and dressed my arm, and we spoke no word to each other during the process. How I *hated* her ! . . . The unfair, illogical little vixen ! . . . The *woman* ! . . .

A few minutes later Suleiman uttered a shout. He could see a rider on the horizon. I hurried towards him.

'It is Djikki, the black slave,' he said.

'Djikki, the French Soudanese soldier, you dog,' I growled at him, and at any other time would have fittingly rewarded the ugly scowl with which he regarded me.

'They are coming,' shouted Djikki as his swift camel drew near; and we all rushed to work like fiends at packing-up and making preparations, for flight and fight respectively.

'They are more than ten hands of five fingers now,' said Djikki, as he dismounted. . . . 'More than a battalion of soldiers in

numbers. . . . They are riding along our track. . . . Here in an hour.'

'Miss Vanbrugh,' said I, 'I have got to go. If you stay here I shall go on and do my work. When that is successfully completed, I shall come back to this spot and shoot myself. . . . Think of Maudie, too—if you won't think of yourself or me. Do you want the girl to meet some of her "Desert Sheikhs" at last?'

'Can you leave Dufour and the Brown Brothers, Major de Beaujolais? . . . I love that little Djikki-bird. . . .'

'I can, Miss Vanbrugh, because I *must*. And if I, a soldier, can do such a thing, a girl can. What could you do by stopping to die here?'

'Shoot,' she replied, 'as fast and as straight as any of them.'

'My dear lady,' I said, 'if four rifles won't keep off a hundred, five won't. If five can, four can. . . . And I must slink off. . . .'

I could have wept. We stood silent, staring at each other.

'Your say goes, Major. I suppose you are right,' answered the girl, and my heart leapt up again. 'But I *hate* myself—and I *loathe* you. . . .'

All worked like slaves to get the four swiftest camels saddled and loaded with light and indispensable things. The fourth one, although a *mehara*, had to carry one *tente d'abri* and bed, water, and food.

I could hardly trust myself to speak as I wrung Dufour's hand, nor when I patted the shoulder of my splendid Achmet. Djikki put my hand to his forehead and his heart, and then knelt to kiss my feet. The drop of comfort in the bitter suffering of that moment was my knowledge that these splendid colleagues of mine—white man, brown man, and black—knew that what I was doing was my Duty, and that what they were about to do was theirs. . . . I bade Suleiman fight for his life; he was too new a recruit to the Service to be expected to fight for an ideal. . . .

Miss Vanbrugh and Maudie mounted their *mehari*—Maudie still as cheerful and plucky as ever, and, I am certain, thrilled, and still hopeful of tender adventure. I should be surprised if her novelette-turned brain and rubbish-fed imagination did not even yet picture the villainous desert wolves, who were so close on our trail, as the brave band of a 'lovely' Desert Sheikh in hot pursuit of one Maudie Atkinson, of whose beauty and desirability he had somehow heard. . . .

There was a shout from Suleiman again. Something moving

on the horizon. I gave the word to start, and took a last look round. My men's camels were *barraked* out of danger. Each man had a hundred rounds of ammunition, a *girba* of water, a little heap of dates, and an impregnable position behind a convenient rock. . . . Four against scores—perhaps hundreds. . . . But in a narrow pass. . . . If only the Touareg would content themselves with shooting, and lack the courage to charge.

'Say, Major,' called Mary, 'let those desert dead-beats hear six rifles for a bit! They may remember an urgent date back in their home-town, to see a man about a dog or something. . . . Think we're a regular sheriff's posse of *vigilantes* or a big, bold band of Bad Men. . . .'

Dare I? It would take a tiny trifle of the load of misery from my shoulders. . . . I would! . . . We brought our camels to their knees again, and rejoined the garrison of the pass, the men of this little African Thermopylae. . . .

Miss Vanbrugh chose her rock, rested her rifle on it, sighted, raised the slide of her back-sight a little—all in a most business-like manner. Maudie crouched at my feet, behind my rock, and I showed her how to work the bolt of my rifle, after each shot. I was one-handed, and Maudie had, of course, never handled a rifle in her life.

I waited until we could distinguish human and animal forms in the approaching cloud of dust, and then gave the range at 2,000 metres. '*Fixe!*' I cried coolly thereafter, for the benefit of my native soldiers. '*Feux de salve!* . . . *En Joue!* . . . *Feu!*'

It was an admirable volley, even Suleiman firing exactly on my word '*Feu!*', although he knew no word of French. Three times I repeated the volley, and then gave the order for a rapid *feu de joie* as it were, at 1,500 metres, so that the advancing Touareg should hear at least six rifles, and suppose that there were probably many more.

I then ordered my men, in succession, to fire two shots as quickly as possible, each firing as soon as the man on his left had got his two shots off. This should create doubt and anxiety as to our numbers.

I then ordered rapid independent fire.

The Touareg had deployed wildly, dismounted, and opened fire. This rejoiced me, for I had conceived the quite unlikely possibility of their charging in one headlong overwhelming wave. . . .

It was time to go.

'Run to your camel, Maudie. Come on, Miss Vanbrugh,' I shouted ; and called to Dufour, 'God watch over you, my dear friend.'

I had to go to the American girl and drag her from the rock behind which she stood, firing steadily and methodically, changing her sights occasionally, a handful of empty cartridge-cases on the ground to her right, a handful of cartridges ready to her hand on the rock. . . .

I shall never forget that picture of Mary Vanbrugh—dressed as an Arab girl and fighting like a trained soldier. . . .

'I'm not coming !' she cried.

I shook her as hard as I could and then literally dragged her to her camel.

'Good-bye, my children,' I cried as I abandoned them.

We rode for the rest of that day, and I thanked God when I could no longer hear the sounds of rifle-fire, glad though I was that they had only died away as distance weakened them, and not with the suddenness that would have meant a charge, massacre and pursuit. I was a bitter, miserable and savage man when at last I was compelled to drew rein, and Miss Vanbrugh bore my evil temper with a gentle womanly sweetness of which I had not thought her capable. She dressed my arm again (and I almost hoped that it might never heal while she was near), and absolutely insisted that she and Maudie should share watches with me. When I refused this, she said :

'Very well, Major, then instead of one watching while two sleep, we'll both watch, and Maudie shall chaperon us—and that's the sort of thing Euclid calls *reductio ad absurdum*, or plumb-silly.' And nothing would shake her, although I could have done so willingly.

What with the wound in my arm and the wound in my soul, I was near the end of my tether. . . .

We took a two-hour watch in turn, poor Maudie nursing a rifle of which she was mortally afraid.

(To be continued.)

LITERARY ACROSTICS.

THE Editor of THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE offers prizes to the value of at least £3 to the most successful solvers of this series of four Literary Acrostics. There will also be consolation prizes, two or more in number: the winners of these will be entitled to choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue. And, further, every month a similar prize of books will be awarded to the sender of the correct solution that is opened first.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 38.

(*The Second of the Series.*)

' Where burning Sappho loved and sung,
Where grew the arts of war and peace,
Where Delos rose, and Phoebus sprung ! '

1. ' If I may have your daughter to my wife,
I'll leave her houses three or four.'
2. ' It was no —— of mortal steed
That made so strange a dint.'
3. ' The wind hath blown a gale all day,
At —— it hath died away.'
4. ' Egad, I think the —— is the hardest to be understood
of the two ! '
5. ' Many a monk, and many a friar,
Many a knight, and many a ——.'
6. ' —— swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its tide.'
7. ' This —— force, that keeps
A thousand pulses dancing.'
8. ' There was —— deep as death ;
And the boldest held his breath,
For a time.'

RULES.

1. Only one answer may be sent to each light.
2. Every correct light and upright will score one point.
3. With his answer every solver must send the coupon that is printed on page x of 'Book Notes' in the preliminary pages of this issue.
4. At the foot of his answer every solver must write his pseudonym (consisting of one word), and nothing else. His name and address should be written at the back.
5. Solvers must on no account write either the quotations or the references on the same paper as their answers. It is not necessary, or even desirable, to send them at all.
6. Solvers who write a second letter, to correct a previous answer, must send the complete solution as they wish it, and not merely state the desired alteration.
7. Answers to Acrostic No. 38 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE, 50A Albemarle Street, London, W. 1, and must arrive not later than April 20.

PROEM : Gray, *Elegy*.

LIGHTS :

1. F	loo	D
2. L	in	E
3. O	yster	S
4. W	av	E
5. E	xcelso	R
6. R	if	T

1. Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, iv. 3.
2. Wolfe, *The Burial of Sir John Moore*.
3. L. Carroll, *Through the Looking-Glass*, ch. 4.
4. Cowper, *On the Loss of the Royal George*.
5. Longfellow, *Excelsior*.
6. Tennyson, *Idylls of the King. Merlin and Vivien*.

Acrostic No. 36 ('Skimming Swallows'): Fifty-three solvers sent in answers; 2 of these had no coupon, and 2 did not observe the rules. Of the 49 answers that counted, 5 were correct in every light, 5 missed one quotation, 2 failed in two lights, 5 missed three lights, and 32 were less successful. The Shelley and Stevenson quotations were known by nearly every one, the Dryden by only a few; several solvers who were correct in most of the acrostic came to grief over the Browning light.

The monthly prize is taken by 'Lapin,' whose answer was the first correct one opened. Miss L. A. Peile, 7 Cosway Street, London, N.W. 1, is entitled to books from Mr. Murray's catalogue to the value of £1.

THE NINTH SERIES.

The prize award this time has had to be flavoured with a pinch of severity. One competitor who solved every acrostic correctly sent in his answer to No. 35 two or three days late; another competitor, who missed one quotation, has not conformed to Rule 4, but has signed her solutions with initials. The great majority of solvers have adhered to the rules with commendable accuracy, and the A.E. must give marks only to those who do so.

The highest possible score for the series was 34. 'Karshish,' 'Lapin,' and 'Ubique' obtained this number; 'Ubique,' a winner last time, is now ineligible; 'Karshish' and 'Lapin' will share the £3 prize. 'Amy,' 'Lass,' 'Oiseau,' 'Penthemeron,' 'Roman,' and

'Square' all scored 33 ; to decide between them, an extra acrostic must be set. These six solvers should send in answers to the following, to arrive not later than April 16, marking their envelopes with the word 'Extra.' No coupon will be required.

EXTRA DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

'——— ! my little owlet !
Who is this, that lights the wigwam ?
With his great eyes lights the wigwam ?
——— ! my little owlet !'

1. 'His vows are lightly spoken,
His faith is hard to bind,
His trust is —— broken,
He fears his fellow-kind.'
2. 'And some he hath made happy, but for him
Is happiness no more.'
3. 'A noble girl ; she tries her lover severely, but she rewards
him generously.'



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